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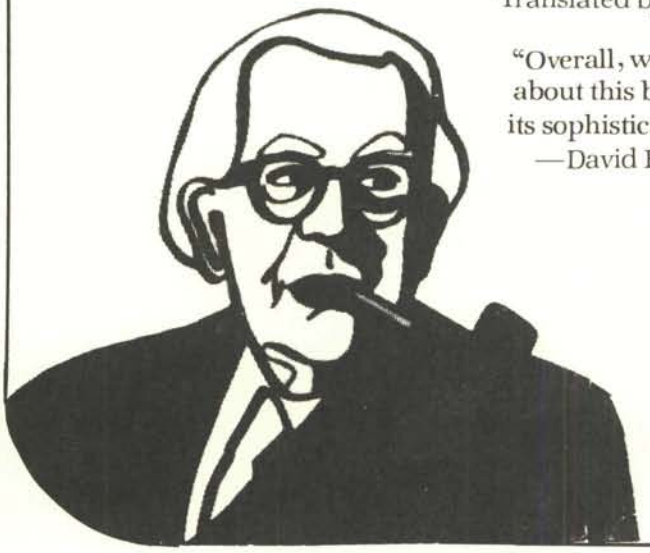

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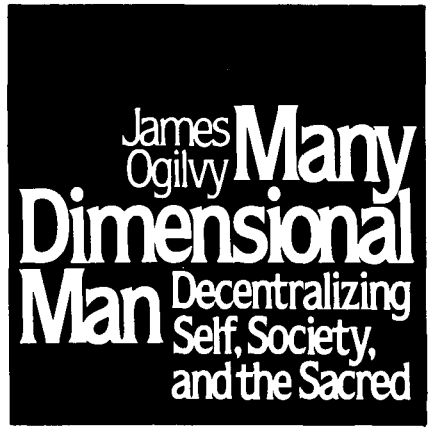

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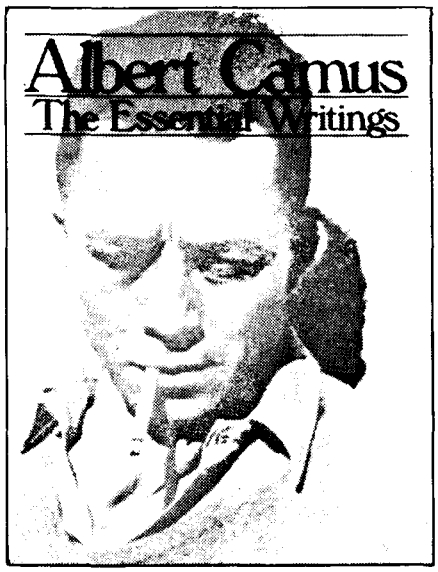

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The Despairing Optimist

RENÉ DUBOS

In the Autumn 1979 issue of the SCHOLAR I expressed the view that unemployment, especially among young people, is the most distressing and dangerous aspect of modern life in the United States and, increasingly, in other parts of the world. Wealthy nations can afford to provide their unemployed citizens with fairly adequate food and shelter, and even with entertainment; but this is not sufficient to satisfy human life. We can become and remain fully human only by being incorporated into a human social structure. In most cases, socialization is best achieved by giving the person the opportunity to function in a socially useful way. An adequate work role gives a sense of belonging and self-esteem. In contrast, people who do not find a place in normal society inevitably create social structures of their own and these are likely to become destructive.

The past two hundred years have seen spectacular advances in the understanding and utilization of physicochemical forces, but progress in the understanding and management of human nature is proving to be much more difficult. Shortages of natural resources, of energy, even of food are problems that we know how to solve technically by scientific methods. Purely technical solutions, however, do not contribute much to peace and happiness if we do not know how to deal with the more human aspects of life—for example, unemployment or the degrading poverty that prevails over immense areas of the globe.

A Martian visiting the earth for the first time would certainly be greatly surprised by the magnitude of the social and economic differences among human beings in different parts of the world, and within a given nation. He would be even more surprised and shocked if he knew that all ethnic and social groups are endowed with a similar range of mental abilities and are capable of reaching similar levels of development if given the same opportunities. A more equal distribution of technological opportunities at the international level was the goal of the U.N. Conference on Science and Technology for Development (UNCSTD) held in Vienna during August 1979. It appears from the results of the conference, however, that we are as inept at helping poor nations to develop as we are at creating useful employment for young people. A reason for this ineptness may be our inability, or our unwillingness, to ask hard and unpleasant questions that might better define the nature of the problem.

One specific purpose of the UNCSTD Vienna conference was to work out methods for giving greater technological competence to the so-called developing nations. As had been predicted in newspaper and magazine articles for the previous two years, economic constraints made it difficult, if not impossible, for developed nations to fund, on an adequate scale, scientific research focused on problems of the Third World. Sharing their technological know-how with the rest of the world was even more difficult because of the need to decide whether an invention or an improvement on a process was private property or part of the common heritage of humankind. The refusal of developed countries to meet all the demands of the poor countries led the latter to charge that neocolonialism and economic imperialism caused the partial failure of the Vienna conference.

It may well be, of course, that poor coun-

RENÉ DUBOS is professor emeritus at the Rockefeller University. His latest books are *The Professor, the Institute, and DNA* and (in French, with Jean Paul Escande) *Chercher: Des médecins, des chercheurs . . . et des hommes.*

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tries are poor simply because they have the bad luck of being located in unfavorable parts of the earth. Most of the world's poor countries are indeed located in the tropics, where agricultural production is usually difficult and where the climate reduces workers' productivity. Other reasons, of a more sociopolitical nature, have also contributed to the lack of economic development in the Third World. Some of the highest levels of agricultural and industrial productivity have been achieved in a few countries that have had to overcome a multiplicity of natural and social handicaps, including extensive damage caused by recent wars. The Netherlands, Israel, and Japan, for instance, are extremely different from each other physically, ethnically, and historically, but they have in common the fact that they are deficient in fossil fuels and other natural resources. Yet all three countries have been highly successful in developing many forms of scientific agriculture and technology.

The Netherlands became prosperous long before its colonial period, despite the fact that much of this country's agricultural and industrial production had to be carried out on land which was essentially man-made and which had to be constantly protected from invasion by water because it lay below sea level. In contrast, Israel entered the modern world only a very few decades ago, at a time when the country consisted chiefly of semi-desertic plains and low denuded hills under almost rainless skies. As for Japan, it was essentially medieval until the Meiji revolution; its topography is characterized by wet lowlands constricted between rugged mountains, and its climate is humid. Different as these three countries are, their phenomenal achievements prove that, in the modern world, the creation of an immensely productive agriculture, advanced technologies, and economic wealth does not depend on the possession of natural resources and favorable geographical conditions. The chief ingredients of success in these three cases must have been a bold spirit of initiative, social discipline with organization, and inventiveness utilizing many forms of theoretical knowledge.

The sociocultural histories of the Netherlands and of Israel are sufficiently well known to suggest hypotheses that might account for their ability to develop despite their natural and historical handicaps. But it is more difficult to understand how Japan has been so successful in assimilating and developing the knowledge and practices that have produced the forms of wealth peculiar to Western civilization.

A few years ago, I read an English translation of a Japanese book that was then immensely popular in Japan, *The Japanese and the Jews* by Isaiah Ben-Dasan. According to Ben-Dasan, some peculiarities of Japan's climate, different from those of Southeast Asia, had imposed on the Japanese strict practices of social discipline and cooperation in order that rice could successfully be cultivated. Such agricultural practices introduced into Japanese life a cohesion and social discipline which facilitated the rapid shift of the working force to technological activities demanding a high level of organization.

In *Shinohata: A Portrait of a Japanese Village*, the English author Ronald P. Dore, who had long lived in Japan, described in detail how a particular village moved from the Spartan existence of twenty years ago to the comfortable life of today in which cars, electric appliances, and color television sets are part of every household. According to Dore, one of the reasons for the successful modernization of Japan was that, until recently, the central government used its financial resources to create a powerful technologic and economic understructure before it devoted any significant percentage of these resources to health, water purification, and other items that contribute to the improvement of life for individual citizens. Modern ways of work and life became common in Shinohata and other parts of the country only after Japan had become an industrial empire.

I do not know whether the explanations presented in the two books just mentioned are valid. I have mentioned them only to illustrate the kind of knowledge needed to explain the phenomenal and almost unique success of Japan with regard to the development of certain aspects of Western civilization, and the complete or relative failure in most other countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Such knowledge might help in the formulation of policies for the future of underdeveloped and developing countries. In any case, they strongly suggest that the recommendations of the UNCSTD Vienna conference are not likely to lead to significant results until

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poor countries manage to create social systems in which the agricultural and technological know-how imported from developed countries can be adapted to local conditions.

Many of the world's people, of course, may not wish to change their social structure and way of life for the sake of matching the achievements of modern agriculture and technology. They have learned that these achievements usually bring in their train a number of undesirable consequences, as documented in countless American and European books describing the human and environmental problems that have so far resulted from being too successful. It is now clear that, beyond a certain point, the rewards of economic affluence diminish and, in prosperous countries, may have already reached the point of negative returns.

Surveys carried out in several prosperous countries, including Japan, reveal that a very large percentage of people are now less interested in the acquisition of wealth than in simpler ways of life, more leisure, and greater personal freedom. Once a reasonable level of affluence has been achieved, it seems certain that further increase does not result in better health or greater happiness. However, many people, even in prosperous countries, believe that they have yet to reach this ideal level, and probably the great majority of people in the Third World are eager to achieve the kind of prosperity that some of us have begun, or pretend, to disdain.

Although the future cannot be predicted, certain forces or trends that are common in the modern world may justify the hope that human life can be improved without creating the problems that have so far resulted from economic success. I realize that my view of these trends is contaminated with a great deal of wishful thinking, but I shall nevertheless suggest that money may not continue to be the ultimate criterion of wealth because the nonmaterial aspects of life seem to be becoming increasingly important in the personal and even national calculations of success.

Schumacher's phrase "Small is beautiful" achieved such rapid and widespread acceptance and popularity that it must correspond to some deep human longing, in particular to a desire for greater simplicity and decentralization. Most people feel that institutions must be reorganized on a more human scale so that they can be more readily comprehended by the human mind. It was believed a generation ago that the world was becoming a global village in which all human life would be homogenized, but there is now a marked trend in the opposite direction. Local regions are preferred to large countries; moderate-sized towns grow, whereas some huge urban agglomerations have begun to shrink; small shops and boutiques have become more numerous; the work of artisans and folk celebrations are increasingly fashionable.

While centralization is still increasing in government and in large corporations, there is also a trend toward the dispersion of governmental and corporate agencies, with the possibility that the ultimate outcome will be an evolution toward federations of small semi-autonomous units.

Regions, cities, and communities will probably become more self-sufficient, in part because of the increasing cost and uncertainty of transport, also because the costs of administration and coordination escalate disproportionately with size; and finally because the advent of the microprocessor may bring about profound changes in methods of production, not only in industry but also in agriculture. The microprocessor makes it possible to carry out, in small localities and by small groups, operations that now require centralization in huge enterprises. More and more people may thus have the opportunity to do work by contract, almost as if they were self-employed. When in need of help they may look for support not to employers but to professional or trade associations that will replace the traditional labor unions. Bureaucracy will undoubtedly survive—but it may acquire a less anonymous and more humane face when its activities are carried out on the regional and community levels.

I shall conclude this daydreaming with a few remarks concerning the role that the humanities should occupy in a world where human beings are of more importance than economics and industrial development.

The history of the past two hundred years demonstrates, beyond a doubt, that technological societies know how to create wealth; but their ultimate success will de-

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Sir Cyril Burt at age 64.

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pend upon their ability to formulate a humanistic culture which is compatible with industry. The shift from obsession with quantitative production of material goods to the achievement of a better life will require changes not only in the attitude of adults but, perhaps even more, in the philosophy of education. Ever since the Industrial Revolution society has placed a premium on the kind of intelligence best suited to the invention of manufactured articles, and to their production on a large scale. In contrast, a humanistic society would prize more highly the understanding of human relationships and of the interplay between humankind, nature, and technology. The most valuable people then might be, not those who are most productive of material wealth, but rather those who have the gift to spread goodwill and happiness—a gift that may be largely innate but that can be cultivated and enhanced by experience and education.

It is not likely that such a profound change in educational goals can be achieved by decrees from central authorities. The most promising approach would seem to be the creation of experimental programs—the successful ones serving as examples—and eventually the creation of a new consensus. One of the main defects of rigid institutional systems is that they resist innovations and tend to regard experiments as deviations and threats, or at best as eccentricities. And yet societies can adapt to new conditions and really progress only by encouraging experiments and giving license to take risks, whether in technology, employment policies, land use, health, or education. In fact, this is the way nature proceeds to achieve adaptation and evolution. Nature is not efficient; it is redundant. It always tries to do things in many different ways. I believe that industrial nations will have to follow a similar course if they want to be successful—to really improve human life instead of simply producing more material wealth. They will have to devise many different ways to approach problems instead of depending on the decisions of a few specialists—because specialists tend to be concerned primarily with efficiency rather than the creative diversity which is essential for the full development and expression of human beings.

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Life and Letters

Disremembrance of Things Present

ARISTIDES

It would be an exaggeration to say that I have long wanted to write a column on the subject of memory but keep forgetting to get around to it. It is closer to the truth, though, to say that if I intend to write about memory, I had better do so soon, while I still have any of my own left. A slow leak in memory, the conventional wisdom has it, is an almost ineluctable part of growing older. But I have undergone a number of blowouts, in the course of which I have discovered that my memory, this faculty for remembering and recollecting, is not exactly steel-belted. Examples abound. Let me see if I can remember any.

In the lobby during the first intermission at the opera—Pavarotti in *Rigoletto*—I notice someone staring at me. He approaches. "Excuse me," he says, "but aren't you Nikolai Aristides?" "I am," I answer. "We went to high school together," he says. I search his face for some clue that will allow me to recall his name, but none is forthcoming. "I am sorry," I say, in surrender, "but I am afraid I do not remember you." He then tells me his name, which I do recall, though I cannot put his high school face to it. Later, leaving the opera house, I am greeted by a former student of mine, who says she didn't think she would ever see Pavarotti upstaged but he certainly was tonight, by the man who played the title role. I agree, numbly and more than a bit dumbly, because, though I recall her face, her personality, even certain of the papers she wrote in my course, I cannot come up with her name. A name without a face, a face without a name: I suppose such little amnesias are common enough. Yet I seem to be suffering them more frequently as time goes on. If there is an art of instant recall, I appear to be a practitioner of its reverse: the art of instant oblivion.

Recently, over a forty-eight-hour period, I made a little list—journal of a forgetter, it might be called—of items that I know very well but that, when the time came to call them up, simply disappeared. The list starts with the word for the kitchen utensil used to drain fruits and vegetables (colander); the name of the town outside San Francisco where my brother lives (Tiburon); the unit of currency in Turkey (lira); the name of the offense made famous by the University of Oklahoma football team (the wishbone). These items all came up in conversation. Others came up on the street during the same period. In a shoe store I encountered a local television johnny, a man I see nearly every night on the television news, and drew a blank on his name. I met a student who had been in a course I taught less than a year ago. While I could remember almost all the nuances of his studently behavior—he specialized in displaying a certain mild boredom provoked by presumed (though unproven) intellectual superiority—I could recollect only his last name, and I am not sure I had that quite right. (Did it or did it not have an *s* on the end?) Finally, in a shopping center, I saw the younger brother of a boyhood friend. He saw me as well, though I think he was not sure I was the person he thought I was, so we did not greet each other. I could not recall his name, but I did remember that his brother's first name was Burt and that, while the family was Jewish, there was nothing Jewish about its last name. This meeting—or, rather, nonmeeting—occurred at roughly two o'clock in the afternoon; at eleven that night, after I put down my book and was about to turn off the bed lamp, I smiled as the right name, David Sherman, popped into my mind.

That smile, you may be sure, did not last long, for the next day I was up and about and

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forgetting again. These episodes—fits?—of forgetfulness are troubling in the extreme. Not that I have ever prided myself, as many people do, on a superior memory. Still, until fairly recently I should have rated my own memory at somewhere between adequate and quite good. When, in schoolboy years, feats of memory were required—for learning batting averages or biological phyla—mine never let me down. Certain things I have never been able to remember: how to spell rhythmn (?), whether women I have known named Ann have an *e* on the end of their names, the definition of teleology, the subjunctive conjugation of *savoir*. Nor can I ever quite recall if it's good fences or the absence of them that make for good neighbors, or whether it is better to cast thy seed upon a rock or into the belly of a whore, though, since I live happily married in an urban setting, neither of these confusions has thus far proved to be a serious problem.

What does irritate me is this endless minor forgetting, this inability to call up information on demand, these illogical blockages and blot-outs. Where did it all start? Difficult for me to pinpoint. As my life has become rather more crowded with small responsibilities and the manifold details that go along with them, I began some four or five years ago to make daily lists of things to do. Although I should like my lists to include items like "Lead raid on Aqaba," "Send letter to General Allenby," "Begin writing book on Arab revolt," mine generally reads: "Pick up laundry," "Cash check," "Buy stamps," "Cook chicken." Occasional slips have occurred: the unmailed letter found three weeks later in the raincoat pocket, the forgotten birthday, the usual Dagwood Bumsteadian husbandly absentmindedness. But thus far my forgetfulness has not entailed anything exotic or privately humiliating. I have never shown up for a dinner party on the wrong night, forgotten my own telephone number or last name, brushed my teeth with shaving cream. But then I am still relatively young.

There are, I gather, people who have what is known in computer science as "random access memory"; they have not only well-stocked minds but a nearly perfect retrieval system. An apposite quotation, an obscure date, a past private experience—they need only call out for it and it is there, like the most faithful and efficient of family retainers, never sick, on duty twenty-four hours a day, working for room and board only. I, on the other hand, begin to resemble a dowager in a shabby bed jacket, pulling on a frayed bell cord and ringing for servants who often arrive two or three hours later, when my need for them is gone. Alas, I have begun to feel rather like the man in the old joke who tells a psychiatrist that he has the terrible problem of not being able to remember anything. "When did this problem first arise?" the psychiatrist asks. To which the man replies, "What problem?"

Yet when it comes to memory, "What problem?" turns out not to be such a dumb question. Many are the theories of memory, for nearly every philosopher has held one. (I think especially of poor Henri Bergson, whose book on laughter furrows most brows and whose book on memory, *Matter and Memory*, is so forgettable.) Many are the experiments devoted to investigating memory, for it has long been one of the great subjects in psychology, especially in connection with pedagogy. Yet the theories often conflict—who, by the way, can remember them all?—and the experiments seem to have more to do with describing the malfunctions, skewings, and tricks of memory than with memory itself. J. Z. Young, the eminent English neurophysiologist, has remarked that we still have scant information about "the principles of the operation of the memory." Research proceeds; language grows more technical ("nucleotide change," "RNA base ratios," "presynaptic inhibition" are but a few of the key phrases required if one is to sit in on a scientific discussion of memory); but the question of how a particular record is written in the memory remains, essentially, a mystery. No one can yet tell me why I am able to forget what I wrote in articles and reviews that I once felt passionately about and yet am able to recall the entire lyrics of "It Was on the Isle of Capri That I Met Her."

Medieval philosophers, and Greek philosophers before them, often believed the human soul to be linked externally to the five senses and internally to imagination and memory. The importance of memory to Plato, for whom the most truly important knowledge was the soul's recollection of Ideas, can scarcely be overestimated. In the ancient

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world, where printed material was scant, memory was decisive to all learning, and the subject of memory was part of the more general study of rhetoric. In *The Art of Memory*, Frances A. Yates discusses in scholarly detail the inner gymnastics of memory and its history, which is said to have begun in the sixth century B.C. with Simonides of Ceos—who was also the first poet to be paid for a poem (and hence the unacknowledged patron saint of all free-lance writers). Cicero wrote about memory. Seneca was famous for his memory, and was said to have been able to repeat two thousand names in the order in which they were given to him. Augustine, himself a teacher of rhetoric, speaks of a friend, one Simplicius, who was supposed to have been able to recite all of Vergil backward. Saint Thomas Aquinas was himself not only supposed to have had a prodigious memory, but was, in addition, a great authority on the subject. The most famous classical work on rhetoric is a how-to-do-it volume entitled *Ad Herennium* (c. 86–82 B.C.) by an author who for some centuries was thought to be Tullius but whose true name, according to Professor Yates, is now acknowledged to be lost to history. Forgotten, then, is the author of the world's most influential book on memory—only the first of endless ironies on this matter of memory.

Too bad, really, for memory is a subject about which it would be good to have clear and uncomplicated information—the straight poop, as they used to say in the army. Instead we are thrown back on common sense, which is usually not such a bad thing to be thrown back on, except that memory so frequently demonstrates itself to be un- or non- or even anti-commonsensical. Take the vexing question of memory and aging. What makes it vexatious, of course, is the fear that as we grow older our minds, quite independent of our wishes, aspire toward a condition of tabula rasa. Such, at any rate, is the received opinion: as we grow older our memories inevitably grow dimmer. Yet scientific opinion, I gather, seems to run contrariwise. A Dr. Leslie Libow, who is a specialist in geriatric care, was not long ago quoted in the *Wall Street Journal* as saying that only 10 percent of the population over the age of sixty-five shows some mental deterioration, such as partial memory loss. I believe you, Doctor, but, even though I am only forty-three years old, I cannot promise to remember your name.

Most people do, I suspect, believe that memory fades with age. Although I know a number of persons in their seventies with superior memories, I think that, for the general run of people, their concern with remembering becomes less. Trollope, in his *Autobiography*, says that for the novelist "there comes a time when he shuts his eyes and shuts his ears. When we talk of memory fading as age comes on, it is such shutting of eyes and ears that we mean. The things around us cease to interest us, and we cannot exercise our minds upon them." This seems to me persuasive, and not restricted to novelists alone. Most of us, as we grow older, have a sharper sense of what truly does interest us—and, concomitantly, what does not. If we liken life to a trip, memory might be considered a suitcase, and after a certain age an experienced traveler becomes rather more discriminating about packing it.

The first time I noticed my memory beginning to slip in any consistent way was some six years ago, when I began university teaching and found how quickly I forgot the names of the students in my classes, excepting only the excellent and the truly egregious ones. I do not *intend* to forget students' names, but evidently they do not go into my suitcase. (When I meet some of them years afterward, I usually pretend to remember their names; to me, dishonesty in this matter is almost always the best policy.) Where do they go, these names? Possibly off into the same empyrean into which strains of music fade.

But then perhaps I oughtn't to mention music, for I have scarcely any musical memory at all. I buy records, I go to concerts, I listen to a fair amount of music. Yet my pleasure, though it can be intense, is not of a lingering kind, for it ends with the music itself, and afterward I cannot recollect it in either tranquillity or agitation. I suppose this is because I do not have a good ear, and so can remember no music but the most timeworn classical war-horses and the least subtle popular tunes. As some people are blessed with splendid auricular memories, others have astonishing ocular memories and are able to recall nearly everything they have once seen, including whole pages of print. A. R. Luria, the Soviet psychologist, in his book *The Mind*

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of a Mnemonist, reports the case of S., a man who could memorize lengthy lists of numbers or stretches of poetry written in a language he did not know, and be able to repeat them forward or backward or (in the case of the rows of numbers) diagonally, not merely on the next day but five, ten, even seventeen years later. This is further than most of us would care to go.

The specialty of my own memory, I am beginning to discover, is literary. I wish this meant that I have stored up long patches of poetry, from Pindar through Pound, that I could quote either for my own pleasure or for use in driving unwanted visitors from my home by force of sheer boredom. But no. When I say my memory is literary I mean that it seems to work toward literary ends almost exclusively. First, I tend to remember things that might be useful for my own scribbling. Second—and more dangerous—I tend to shape my memories, to edit them, rewrite them even, working with the facts of past experience less like a historian or a biographer than like a novelist. But an instance is wanted. Nurse, the file, please, on Mr. Aristides.

I have a dear friend who has a brilliant and mischievous sense of humor. More than once I have attempted to explain the rare quality of his humor to other people; for part of it has to do with the fact that he does not seem to require an audience, or at least an immediate one, for some of his best jests. In this respect he is rather like a highly polished pianist who plays chiefly for his own pleasure. But to make more vivid my friend's sly wit, I have found myself telling the following anecdote about him:

A woman came up to my friend at a party to tell him how charming she thought his wife was. He thanked her, allowed that he had to agree with her, then added that most people were surprised to learn that his wife was deaf, indeed had been from birth. The fact is, of course, that his wife hears very well, and always has. His own private pleasure was to watch that woman, during the remaining hours of the party, speak to his wife very loudly and with most emphatic pronunciation.

Now the only thing wrong with this story is that it is completely untrue. I do not know quite why, but I felt a creeping doubt about it, and so one day queried my friend about its truthfulness. He replied that, no, he had never told anyone his wife was deaf, but suggested that I might have confused this incident with another that also took place at a party. There, a man, a famous local talker, was holding forth with great passion, causing a young lady to remark to my friend about the man's extraordinary conversational powers. Yes, my friend replied, and the wondrous thing is that, gregarious fellow and raconteur that he is now, he was an autistic child who lived in an igloo of self-chosen silence for the first twenty-five years of his life. This was, of course, the sheerest invention. The next morning, when the young woman told her boyfriend about this remarkable phenomenon and from whom she had heard it, he instantly recognized it as a piece of my friend's handiwork, and set her straight.

In its essentials, my memory's rewriting of this incident is not entirely false to the spirit of my friend's humor. Whether it is an improvement over the true happening I do not know. What I do know is that I did not intend it as an improvement. I did not intend it at all; I thought I was reporting, as they used to say on the old *Dragnet* television series, "just the facts, ma'am." But I am afraid that it all comes perilously close to the kind of literary embroidery that the late London drama critic James Agate—himself a great improver upon the facts—often referred to as "the higher truth."

It may well be that the memories of writers are to be trusted least of all. Truman Capote used to brag about his memory and, in connection with his book *In Cold Blood,* claimed that he required neither tape recorder nor even a notebook for recollecting and recording ample chunks of conversation. Not long after the book appeared, an article about Capote published in *Esquire* reported that while Capote was being interviewed in a restaurant, someone came up to his table but Capote could not remember his name; the man turned out to be Capote's own lawyer. Willie Morris once told a newspaper reporter that he thought writers tended to drink heavily to blunt the edge of memory, which they felt, according to him, more sharply than others. (One can almost hear the tinkle of ice cubes accompanying that observation.) More convincing to me is the notion put forth by the

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Canadian novelist Mordecai Richler, who maintained that there is a distinct difference in the very nature of experience before and after a person decides to become a writer. Before the decision to write, one experiences things directly; after the decision to write, nearly all experience becomes grist for writing, and thus is often colored and twisted and pounded into literary shape. My favorite title for a memoir, *What Little I Remember* by the physicist Otto Frisch, could never have been chosen by a writer. One of the occupational chores of being a writer, in fact, is that one is expected to remember nearly everything that one has experienced. Memory, for any writer, is the bank on which he must draw. Mencken was on target when he said the writer's task was to "essay to invent new ideas, to precipitate novel and intellectual concepts out of the chaos of memory and perception."

Yet the memory problem is scarcely a writer's problem alone. Someone—will it surprise you to learn that I have forgotten who?—has said that the human consciousness, in its daily ramblings, tends to spend roughly 40 percent of its time in the past, roughly 40 percent in the future, and the remainder in the present. As one grows older, I suspect that the portion of time spent thinking about the past lengthens even as the past itself lengthens, and that portion spent thinking about the future diminishes even as the future itself diminishes. All the more frustrating, therefore, does the idea of a faulty memory loom. The very notion of spending an increasing amount of time dwelling on a past that never did quite exist is, to put it gently, highly disturbing. It is bad enough that we cannot know the future; that we have, into the bargain, forgotten or gotten askew large segments of the past is appalling.

Worse news: William Maxwell, a novelist now in his seventies and one whom I greatly admire for his literary delicacy and temperamental balance, reveals that he holds even bleaker views about the accuracy of memory than I. This is doubly interesting, I think, because William Maxwell is a writer whose materials seem to derive chiefly from his own past. *The Folded Leaf, Time Will Darken It,* and his most recent novel, *So Long, See You Tomorrow,* are all works soaked in memory—in what Proust (the Homer and Freud and Clausewitz of the subject of memory) called "a nostalgic longing for impossible journeys through the realms of time." In *So Long, See You Tomorrow,* Maxwell, speaking through a narrator who seems clearly to be the author himself, says:

> What we, or at any rate what I, refer to confidently as memory—meaning a moment, a scene, a fact that has been subjected to a fixative and thereby rescued from oblivion—is really a form of storytelling that goes on continually in the mind and often changes with the telling. Too many conflicting emotional interests are involved for life ever to be wholly acceptable, and possibly it is the work of the storyteller to rearrange things so that they conform to this end. In any case, in talking about the past we lie with every breath we draw.

"In speaking about the past we lie with every breath we draw." Is this dire declaration true? When our own personal past is entailed, I rather suspect it is true. Proust would agree with William Maxwell, at least to the extent of believing that we cannot will, or command, our memories. "And so it is with our own past," he wrote in the "Overture" to *Remembrance of Things Past.* "It is a labour in vain to attempt to recapture it: all the efforts of our intellect must prove futile. The past is hidden somewhere outside the realm, beyond the reach of intellect, in some material object (in the sensation which that material object will give us) which we do not suspect. And as for that object, it depends on chance whether we come upon it or not before we ourselves must die." Proust himself, of course, found his material object, the plump little cakes called *petites madeleines.* For many the material object has been the couch in the psychoanalyst's office, for psychoanalysis, whatever else it may or may not be, is a determined—some would say a predetermined—journey in search of memory lost.

But a distinction must be made between the memory for one's own past (in which one is too thoroughly implicated, usually as a plaintiff, but sometimes as a defendant) and the memory for objects, events, and ideas outside oneself. It is masterful memory of this latter kind that is required in serious scholarship, along, of course, with keen intelligence. Benjamin Jowett, Master of Balliol College—he who is the subject of the poem that begins,

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"First come I. My name is Jowett. / There's no knowledge, but I know it"—used to maintain that the absence of a really first-class memory was what kept him from being a great scholar. Wallace Stevens similarly remarks in one of his letters, "I could never possibly have any serious contact with philosophy because I have not the memory." Henry James, totting up Sainte-Beuve's literary virtues, mentions "his marvelous memory." And William James, in his chapter on memory in *The Principles of Psychology*, wrote that any example of "your quarto or folio editions of mankind must needs have amazing retentiveness of the purely physiological sort."

Yet William James would have agreed, I expect, with the author of the *Ad Herennium*, who claimed that in mnemonics brute rereading was often necessary, and that in matters having to do with memory "theory is almost valueless unless made good by industry, devotion, toil and care." This is borne out elsewhere. The Talmud shuls of Eastern Europe used to train young boys in the daily memorizing and explication of a folio of the Talmud, and an old rabbinic doctrine holds that knowledge of a text is only assured by rereading it 101 times. William Lyon Phelps, who used to allow students in his Shakespeare course to substitute accurately quoted Shakespearean passages for answers to examination questions, quotes President Charles Eliot of Harvard who admitted that his "gift" for never forgetting a name came from repeating half a dozen times in his mind the name of each new person he met, while looking that person in the face. Many famous feats of memory, in short, have hard work behind them. This perhaps explains why the English used to say that a gentleman is not someone who knows Greek but someone who has forgotten it.

There are people who are born with extraordinary memories (idiot savants among them), and there are people who train their memories into a condition of extraordinariness (fellows who have memorized the Manhattan telephone directory or can name twenty-seven films in which Akim Tamiroff did not play a character named Mohammed), but memory at its most impressive is that of the truly superior mind, whose memory is owed to study, to thoughtfulness, and to the integration of all the forces of intellection. William James put it nicely: "The one who thinks over his experiences most and weaves them into systematic relations with each other, will be the one with the best memory." And so it has seemed to me among the few powerful scholars I have known. They have only to press the button of memory to call up the most wondrous network of associations. Their suitcases, to return to my earlier metaphor, have a great deal more in them because they are so much more intelligently packed.

Next to them I think of myself as a man in a crowded railway station, schlepping three shopping bags, out of which obtrude bits of tissue, comic books, soiled linen. A cigarette is perched behind my ear, even though I do not smoke; a train ticket is held between my teeth; and my raincoat pockets are stuffed with sheet music and old socks. Such at any rate is the self-view of one man whose memory is giving him difficulty. This view is not so very discrepant from reality. A few more details: I will find myself opening a linen closet to hang up my overcoat; I will begin to dial a telephone number, and three digits into the dialing forget who it is I am calling; I will, in conversation, have a pertinent point to interject, but when it comes my time to speak, the point has eluded me. These things do not happen always, but often enough to be highly disconcerting.

I should think myself a little mad, in fact, if I did not observe so many of my contemporaries—even people ten years on either side of my forty-three years—who seem to be going through similar little *maladies de la mémoire*. I telephone an acquaintance who suggests that I get back to him that same evening. I ask for his home telephone number. He cannot produce it. A friend accepts an invitation in the early afternoon for an informal dinner that very night—and fails to show up because, in a few hours' time, he has completely forgotten about it. At a New York university I enter an elevator with a literary critic of some fame; in the elevator is a historian of equal fame, a woman he has known for perhaps thirty years. It is incumbent on him to introduce her to me. "You are not going to believe this," he says to her, "but I'll be damned if I can remember your name."

Which leads me—where else is an intellectual ever led?—to a theory. It is the thoroughly untested theory (no polls, no labo-

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ratory work, no systematic surveys) that memory loss is often most acute, or at least acutely felt, in one's prime. I put this theory forth on the ground that while one's prime is usually, by definition, the time of the height of one's powers, it is also the time of the height of distraction in one's life. Please don't worry—I have no intention of dragging in that Tootsie Roll cliché of popular psychology, the mid-life crisis, but the fact remains that so very much is swirling about in the years of one's prime. The suitcase of memory—filled with all that has gone before, filled with all that is happening currently—strains at the straps. Most of us wish to pack in everything. It cannot, for most of us, be done. William James quotes a French writer, a M. Ribot: "We thus reach the paradoxical result that one condition of remembering is that we should forget." And James himself adds, "In the practical use of our intellect, forgetting is as important a function as recollecting."

On the need for forgetting, or the problem of too keen a memory, Jorge Luis Borges has written a wonderful little story entitled "Funes the Memorious." Ireneo Funes is a young man living in a small Uruguayan town, who has a knack for recalling names and also for telling the time of day without aid either of a clock or of the sun. One day he falls from his horse and is left paralyzed, but also with the gift of "infallible perception and memory." He could thus, among other things, learn a new language in a day. Borges writes: "He could reconstruct all his dreams, all his half dreams. . . . Funes remembered not only every leaf of every tree of every wood, but also every one of the times he had perceived or imagined it. He decided to reduce each of his past days to some seventy thousand memories, which would then be defined by means of ciphers." And deeds even more astonishing than these are recounted. Yet Borges's narrator notes: "I suspect, however, that he was not very capable of thought. To think is to forget differences, generalize, make abstractions." Reading Borges's eight-page story, one realizes what an absolute hell remembering everything would be. "Funes the Memorious" ends on this flat sentence: "Ireneo Funes died in 1889 [at age 21], of congestion of the lungs." But the real cause of death, one gathers, was drowning by data.

The powers of memory are mysterious. Dwelling on the finest memories cannot relieve a toothache or alter a low mood induced by foul weather. But not to have fine memories to dwell upon seems an unbounded sadness. Vast though the differences between two persons' memories may be, no one, it seems, can quite comb his memory clean of oddments. (Only the other evening I, who yield to nearly everyone in my knowledge of jazz, was able to call up immediately the name of the wife of Dick Haymes who was herself a cabaret singer—Fran Jefferies—when no one else at table could recollect it. But, then, who doesn't have such toys stored in his mental attic?) Santayana thought "inheritance and memory make human stability," and in *The Life of Reason* he wrote: "In endowing us with memory nature has revealed to us a truth utterly unimaginable to the unreflective creation, the truth of mortality." Others have felt that memory, with the ability it bestows to allow a person to live vividly away from his body and immediate environment, is a possible sign of the ability to continue to live after the body has disappeared. I am not ready to argue that this is true, but it is a point I do not intend to forget.

Richard Rovere

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Blurred Genres

The Refiguration of Social Thought

CLIFFORD GEERTZ

I

CERTAIN TRUTHS ABOUT THE SOCIAL SCIENCES today seem self-evident. One is that in recent years there has been an enormous amount of genre mixing in social science, as in intellectual life generally, and such blurring of kinds is continuing apace. Another is that many social scientists have turned away from a laws-and-instances ideal of explanation toward a cases-and-interpretations one, looking less for the sort of thing that connects planets and pendulums and more for the sort that connects chrysanthemums and swords. Yet another truth is that analogies drawn from the humanities are coming to play the kind of role in sociological understanding that analogies drawn from the crafts and technology have long played in physical understanding. I not only think these things are true, I think they are true together; and the culture shift that makes them so is the subject of this essay: the refiguration of social thought.

This genre blurring is more than just a matter of Harry Houdini or Richard Nixon turning up as characters in novels or of midwestern murder sprees described as though a gothic romancer had imagined them. It is philosophical inquiries looking like literary criticism (think of Stanley Cavell on Beckett or Thoreau, Sartre on Flaubert), scientific discussions looking like belles lettres *morceaux* (Lewis Thomas, Loren Eiseley), baroque fantasies presented as deadpan empirical observations (Borges, Barthelme), histories that consist of equations and tables or law court testimony (Fogel and Engerman, Le Roi Ladurie), documentaries that read like true confessions (Mailer), parables posing as ethnographies (Castenada), theoretical treatises set out as travelogues (Lévi-Strauss), ideological arguments cast as historiographical inquiries (Edward Said), epistemological studies constructed like political tracts (Paul Feyerabend),

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methodological polemics got up as personal memoirs (James Watson). Nabokov's *Pale Fire*, that impossible object made of poetry and fiction, footnotes and images from the clinic, seems very much of the time; one waits only for quantum theory in verse or biography in algebra.

Of course, to a certain extent this sort of thing has always gone on—Lucretius, Mandeville, and Erasmus Darwin all made their theories rhyme. But the present jumbling of varieties of discourse has grown to the point where it is becoming difficult either to label authors (What *is* Foucault—historian, philosopher, political theorist? What Thomas Kuhn—historian, philosopher, sociologist of knowledge?) or to classify works (What is George Steiner's *After Babel*—linguistics, criticism, culture history? What William Gass's *On Being Blue*—treatise, causerie, apologetic?). And thus it is more than a matter of odd sports and occasional curiosities, or of the admitted fact that the innovative is, by definition, hard to categorize. It is a phenomenon general enough and distinctive enough to suggest that what we are seeing is not just another redrawing of the cultural map—the moving of a few disputed borders, the marking of some more picturesque mountain lakes—but an alteration of the principles of mapping. Something is happening to the way we think about the way we think.

We need not accept hermetic views of *écriture* as so many signs signing signs, or give ourselves so wholly to the pleasure of the text that its meaning disappears into our responses, to see that there has come into our view of what we read and what we write a distinctly democratical temper. The properties connecting texts with one another, that put them, ontologically anyway, on the same level, are coming to seem as important in characterizing them as those dividing them; and rather than face an array of natural kinds, fixed types divided by sharp qualitative differences, we more and more see ourselves surrounded by a vast, almost continuous field of variously intended and diversely constructed works we can order only practically, relationally, and as our purposes prompt us. It is not that we no longer have conventions of interpretation; we have more than ever, built—often enough jerry-built—to accommodate a situation at once fluid, plural, uncentered, and ineradicably untidy.

So far as the social sciences are concerned, all this means that their oft-lamented lack of character no longer sets them apart. It is even more difficult than it always has been to regard them as underdeveloped natural sciences, awaiting only time and aid from more advanced quarters to harden them, or as ignorant and pretentious usurpers of the mission of the humanities, promising certainties where none can be, or as comprising a clearly distinctive enterprise, a third culture between Snow's canonical two. But that is all to the good: freed from having to become

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taxonomically upstanding, because nobody else is, individuals thinking of themselves as social (or behavioral or human or cultural) scientists have become free to shape their work in terms of its necessities rather than received ideas as to what they ought or ought not to be doing. What Clyde Kluckhohn once said about anthropology—that it's an intellectual poaching license—not only seems more true now than when he said it, but true of a lot more than anthropology. Born omniform, the social sciences prosper as the condition I have been describing becomes general.

It has thus dawned on social scientists that they did not need to be mimic physicists or closet humanists or to invent some new realm of being to serve as the object of their investigations. Instead they could proceed with their vocation, trying to discover order in collective life, and decide how what they were doing was connected to related enterprises when they managed to get some of it done; and many of them have taken an essentially hermeneutic—or, if that word frightens, conjuring up images of biblical zealots, literary humbugs, and Teutonic professors, an "interpretive"—approach to their task. Given the new genre dispersion, many have taken other approaches: structuralism, neo-positivism, neo-Marxism, micro-micro descriptivism, macro-macro system building, and that curious combination of common sense and common nonsense, sociobiology. But the move toward conceiving of social life as organized in terms of symbols (signs, representations, *signifiants, Darstellungen* . . . the terminology varies), whose meaning (sense, import, *signification, Bedeutung* . . .) we must grasp if we are to understand that organization and formulate its principles, has grown by now to formidable proportions. The woods are full of eager interpreters.

Interpretive explanation—and it is a form of explanation, not just exalted glossography—trains its attention on what institutions, actions, images, utterances, events, customs, all the usual objects of social-scientific interest, mean to those whose institutions, actions, customs, and so on they are. As a result, it issues not in laws like Boyle's, or forces like Volta's, or mechanisms like Darwin's, but in constructions like Burckhardt's, Weber's, or Freud's: systematic unpackings of the conceptual world in which *condottiere,* Calvinists, or paranoids live.

The manner of these constructions itself varies: Burckhardt portrays, Weber models, Freud diagnoses. But they all represent attempts to formulate how this people or that, this period or that, this person or that, makes sense to itself and, understanding that, what we understand about social order, historical change, or psychic functioning in general. Inquiry is directed toward cases or sets of cases, and toward the particular features that mark them off; but its aims are as far-reaching as those of mechanics or physiology: to distinguish the materials of human experience.

With such aims and such a manner of pursuing them come as well

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some novelties in analytical rhetoric, the tropes and imageries of explanation. As theory, scientific or otherwise, moves mainly by analogy, a "seeing-as" comprehension of the less intelligible by the more (the earth is a magnet, the heart is a pump, light is a wave, the brain is a computer, and space is a balloon), when its course shifts, the conceits in which it expresses itself shift with it. In the earlier stages of the natural sciences, before the analogies became so heavily intramural—and in those (cybernetics, neurology) in which they still have not—it has been the world of the crafts and, later, of industry that has for the most part provided the well-understood realities (well-understood because, *certum quod factum,* as Vico said, man had made them) with which the ill-understood ones (ill-understood because he had not) could be brought into the circle of the known. Science owes more to the steam engine than the steam engine owes to science; without the dyer's art there would be no chemistry; metallurgy is mining theorized. In the social sciences, or at least in those that have abandoned a reductionist conception of what they are about, the analogies are coming more and more from the contrivances of cultural performance than from those of physical manipulation—from theater, painting, grammar, literature, law, play. What the lever did for physics, the chess move promises to do for sociology.

Promises are not always kept, of course, and when they are, they often turn out to have been threats; but the casting of social theory in terms more familiar to gamesters and aestheticians than to plumbers and engineers is clearly well under way. The recourse to the humanities for explanatory analogies in the social sciences is at once evidence of the destabilization of genres and of the rise of "the interpretive turn," and their most visible outcome is a revised style of discourse in social studies. The instruments of reasoning are changing and society is less and less represented as an elaborate machine or a quasi-organism than as a serious game, a sidewalk drama, or a behavioral text.

II

All this fiddling around with the proprieties of composition, inquiry, and explanation represents, of course, a radical alteration in the sociological imagination, propelling it in directions both difficult and unfamiliar. And like all such changes in fashions of the mind, it is about as likely to lead to obscurity and illusion as it is to precision and truth. If the result is not to be elaborate chatter or the higher nonsense, a critical consciousness will have to be developed; and as so much more of the imagery, method, theory, and style is to be drawn from the humanities than previously, it will mostly have to come from humanists and their apologists rather than from natural scientists and theirs. That humanists, after

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years of regarding social scientists as technologists or interlopers, are ill equipped to do this is something of an understatement.

Social scientists, having just freed themselves, and then only partially, from dreams of social physics—covering laws, unified science, operationalism, and all that—are hardly any better equipped. For them, the general muddling of vocational identities could not have come at a better time. If they are going to develop systems of analysis in which such conceptions as following a rule, constructing a representation, expressing an attitude, or forming an intention are going to play central roles—rather than such conceptions as isolating a cause, determining a variable, measuring a force, or defining a function—they are going to need all the help they can get from people who are more at home among such notions than they are. It is not interdisciplinary brotherhood that is needed, nor even less highbrow eclecticism. It is recognition on all sides that the lines grouping scholars together into intellectual communities, or (what is the same thing) sorting them out into different ones, are these days running at some highly eccentric angles.

The point at which the reflections of humanists on the practices of social scientists seems most urgent is with respect to the deployment in social analysis of models drawn from humanist domains—that "wary reasoning from analogy," as Locke called it, that "leads us often into the discovery of truths and useful productions, which would otherwise lie concealed." (Locke was talking about rubbing two sticks together to produce fire and the atomic-friction theory of heat, though business partnership and the social contract would have served him as well.) Keeping the reasoning wary, thus useful, thus true, is, as we say, the name of the game.

The game analogy is both increasingly popular in contemporary social theory and increasingly in need of critical examination. The impetus for seeing one or another sort of social behavior as one or another sort of game has come from a number of sources (not excluding, perhaps, the prominence of spectator sports in mass society). But the most important are Wittgenstein's conception of forms of life as language games, Huizinga's ludic view of culture, and the new strategics of von Neumann's and Morgenstern's *Theory of Games and Economic Behavior.* From Wittgenstein has come the notion of intentional action as "following a rule"; from Huizinga, of play as the paradigm form of collective life; from von Neumann and Morgenstern, of social behavior as a reciprocative maneuvering toward distributive payoffs. Taken together they conduce to a nervous and nervous-making style of interpretation in the social sciences that mixes a strong sense of the formal orderliness of things with an equally strong sense of the radical arbitrariness of that order: chessboard inevitability that could as well have worked out otherwise.

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The writings of Erving Goffman—perhaps the most celebrated American sociologist right now, and certainly the most ingenious—rest, for example, almost entirely on the game analogy. (Goffman also employs the language of the stage quite extensively, but as his view of the theater is that it is an oddly mannered kind of interaction game—Ping-Pong in masks—his work is not, at base, really dramaturgical.) Goffman applies game imagery to just about everything he can lay his hands on, which, as he is no respecter of property rights, is a very great deal. The to-and-fro of lies, meta-lies, unbelievable truths, threats, tortures, bribes, and blackmail that comprises the world of espionage is construed as an "expression game"; a carnival of deceptions rather like life in general, because, in a phrase that could have come from Conrad or Le Carré, "agents [are] a little like us all and all of us [are] a little like agents." Etiquette, diplomacy, crime, finance, advertising, law, seduction, and the everyday "realm of bantering decorum" are seen as "information games"—mazy structures of players, teams, moves, positions, signals, information states, gambles, and outcomes, in which only the "gameworthy"—those willing and able "to dissemble about anything"—prosper.

What goes on in a psychiatric hospital, or any hospital or prison or even a boarding school in Goffman's work is a "ritual game of having a self," where the staff holds most of the face cards and all of the trumps. A tête-à-tête, a jury deliberation, "a task jointly pursued by persons physically close to one another," a couple dancing, lovemaking, or boxing—indeed all face-to-face encounters—are games in which, "as every psychotic and comic ought to know, any accurately improper move can poke through the thin sleeve of immediate reality." Social conflict, deviance, entrepreneurship, sex roles, religious rites, status ranking, and the simple need for human acceptance get the same treatment. Life is just a bowl of strategies.

Or, perhaps better, as Damon Runyon once remarked, it is three-to-two against. For the image of society that emerges from Goffman's work, and from that of the swarm of scholars who in one way or another follow or depend on him, is of an unbroken stream of gambits, ploys, artifices, bluffs, disguises, conspiracies, and outright impostures as individuals and coalitions of individuals struggle—sometimes cleverly, more often comically—to play enigmatical games whose structure is clear but whose point is not. Goffman's is a radically unromantic vision of things, acrid and bleakly knowing, and one which sits rather poorly with traditional humanistic pieties. But it is no less powerful for that. Nor, with its uncomplaining play-it-as-it-lays ethic, is it all that inhumane.

However that may be, not all gamelike conceptions of social life are quite so grim, and some are positively frolicsome. What connects them

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all is the view that human beings are less driven by forces than submissive to rules, that the rules are such as to suggest strategies, the strategies are such as to inspire actions, and the actions are such as to be self-rewarding—*pour le sport.* As literal games—baseball or poker or Parcheesi—create little universes of meaning, in which some things can be done and some cannot (you can't castle in dominoes), so too do the analogical ones of worship, government, or sexual courtship (you can't mutiny in a bank). Seeing society as a collection of games means seeing it as a grand plurality of accepted conventions and appropriate procedures—tight, airless worlds of move and countermove, life *en règle,* "I wonder," Prince Metternich is supposed to have said when an aide whispered into his ear at a royal ball that the czar of all the Russians was dead, "I wonder what his motive could have been."

The game analogy is not a view of things that is likely to commend itself to humanists, who like to think of people not as obeying the rules and angling for advantage but as acting freely and realizing their finer capacities. But that it seems to explain a great deal about a great many aspects of modern life, and in many ways to catch its tone, is hardly deniable. ("If you can't stand the Machiavellianism," as a recent *New Yorker* cartoon said, "get out of the cabal.") Thus if it is to be countered it cannot be by mere disdain, refusing to look through the telescope, or by passioned restatements of hallowed truths, quoting scripture against the sun. It is necessary to get down to the details of the matter, to examine the studies and to critique the interpretations—whether Goffman's of crime as character gambling, Harold Garfinkel's of sex change as identity play, Gregory Bateson's of schizophrenia as rule confusion, or my own of the complicated goings-on in a mideastern bazaar as an information contest. As social theory turns from propulsive metaphors (the language of pistons) toward ludic ones (the language of pastimes), the humanities are connected to its arguments not in the fashion of skeptical bystanders but, as the source of its imagery, chargeable accomplices.

III

The drama analogy for social life has of course been around in a casual sort of way—all the world's a stage and we but poor players who strut and so on—for a very long time. And terms from the stage, most notably "role," have been staples of sociological discourse since at least the 1930s. What is relatively new—new, not unprecedented—are two things. First, the full weight of the analogy is coming to be applied extensively and systematically, rather than being deployed piecemeal fashion—a few allusions here, a few tropes there. And second, it is coming to be applied less in the depreciatory "mere show," masks and mummery

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mode that has tended to characterize its general use, and more in a constructional, genuinely dramaturgical one—making, not faking, as the anthropologist Victor Turner has put it.

The two developments are linked, of course. A constructionalist view of what theater is—that is, poiesis—implies that a dramatistic perspective in the social sciences needs to involve more than pointing out that we all have our entrances and exits, we all play parts, miss cues, and love pretense. It may or may not be a Barnum and Bailey world and we may or may not be walking shadows, but to take the drama analogy seriously is to probe behind such familiar ironies to the expressive devices that make collective life seem anything at all. The trouble with analogies—it is also their glory—is that they connect what they compare in both directions. Having trifled with theater's idiom, some social scientists find themselves drawn into the rather tangled coils of its aesthetic.

Such a more thoroughgoing exploitation of the drama analogy in social theory—as an analogy, not an incidental metaphor—has grown out of sources in the humanities not altogether commensurable. On the one hand, there has been the so-called ritual theory of drama associated with such diverse figures as Jane Harrison, Francis Fergusson, T. S. Eliot, and Antonin Artaud. On the other, there is the symbolic action—"dramatism," as he calls it—of the American literary theorist and philosopher Kenneth Burke, whose influence is, in the United States anyway, at once enormous and—because almost no one actually uses his baroque vocabulary, with its reductions, ratios, and so on—elusive. The trouble is, these approaches pull in rather opposite directions: the ritual theory toward the affinities of theater and religion—drama as communion, the temple as stage; the symbolic action theory toward those of theater and rhetoric—drama as persuasion, the platform as stage. And this leaves the basis of the analogy—just what in the theatron is like what in the agora—hard to focus. That liturgy and ideology are histrionic is obvious enough, as it is that etiquette and advertising are. But just what that means is a good deal less so.

Probably the foremost proponent of the ritual theory approach in the social sciences right now is Victor Turner. A British formed, American re-formed anthropologist, Turner, in a remarkable series of works trained on the ceremonial life of a Central African tribe, has developed a conception of "social drama" as a regenerative process that, rather like Goffman's of "social gaming" as strategic interaction, has drawn to it such a large number of able researchers as to produce a distinct and powerful interpretive school.

For Turner, social dramas occur "on all levels of social organization from state to family." They arise out of conflict situations—a village falls into factions, a husband beats a wife, a region rises against the state—

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and proceed to their denouements through publicly performed conventionalized behavior. As the conflict swells to crisis and the excited fluidity of heightened emotion, where people feel at once more enclosed in a common mood and loosened from their social moorings, ritualized forms of authority—litigation, feud, sacrifice, prayer—are invoked to contain it and render it orderly. If they succeed, the breach is healed and the status quo, or something resembling it, is restored; if they do not, it is accepted as incapable of remedy and things fall apart into various sorts of unhappy endings: migrations, divorces, or murders in the cathedral. With differing degrees of strictness and detail, Turner and his followers have applied this schema to tribal passage rites, curing ceremonies, and judicial processes; to Mexican insurrections, Icelandic sagas, and Thomas Becket's difficulties with Henry II; to picaresque narrative, millenarian movements, Caribbean carnivals, and Indian peyote hunts; and to the political upheaval of the sixties. A form for all seasons.

This hospitableness in the face of cases is at once the major strength of the ritual theory version of the drama analogy and its most prominent weakness. It can expose some of the profoundest features of social process, but at the expense of making vividly disparate matters look drably homogeneous.

Rooted as it is in the repetitive performance dimensions of social action—the reenactment and thus the reexperiencing of known form—the ritual theory not only brings out the temporal and collective dimensions of such action and its inherently public nature with particular sharpness; it brings out also its power to transmute not just opinions, but, as the British critic Charles Morgan has said with respect to drama proper, the people who hold them. "The great impact [of the theater]," Morgan writes, "is neither a persuasion of the intellect nor a beguiling of the senses. . . . It is the enveloping movement of the whole drama on the soul of man. We surrender and are changed." Or at least we are when the magic works. What Morgan, in another fine phrase, calls "the suspense of form . . . the incompleteness of a known completion," is the source of the power of this "enveloping movement," a power, as the ritual theorists have shown, that is hardly less forceful (and hardly less likely to be seen as otherworldly) when the movement appears in a female initiation rite, a peasant revolution, a national epic, or a star chamber.

Yet these formally similar processes have different content. They say, as we might put it, rather different things, and thus have rather different implications for social life. And though ritual theorists are hardly incognizant of that fact, they are, precisely because they are so concerned with the general movement of things, ill-equipped to deal with it. The great dramatic rhythms, the commanding forms of theater, are perceived in social processes of all sorts, shapes, and significances (though ritual

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theorists in fact do much better with the cyclical, restorative periodicities of comedy than the linear, consuming progressions of tragedy, whose ends tend to be seen as misfires rather than fulfillments). Yet the individuating details, the sort of thing that makes *A Winter's Tale* different from *Measure for Measure*, *Macbeth* from *Hamlet*, are left to encyclopedic empiricism: massive documentation of a single proposition—*plus ça change, plus c'est le même changement*. If dramas are, to adapt a phrase of Susanne Langer's, poems in the mode of action, something is being missed: what exactly, socially, the poems say.

This unpacking of performed meaning is what the symbolic action approaches are designed to accomplish. Here there is no single name to cite, just a growing catalogue of particular studies, some dependent on Kenneth Burke, some on Ernst Cassirer, Northrop Frye, Michel Foucault, or Emile Durkheim, concerned to say what some bit of acted saying—a coronation, a sermon, a riot, an execution—says. If ritual theorists, their eye on experience, tend to be hedgehogs, symbolic action theorists, their eye on expression, tend to be foxes.

Given the dialectical nature of things, we all need our opponents, and both sorts of approach are essential. What we are most in want of right now is some way of synthesizing them. In my own about-to-be-published analysis of the traditional Indic polity in Bali as a "theater state"—cited here not because it is exemplary, but because it is mine—I have tried to address this problem. In this analysis I am concerned, on the one hand (the Burkean one), to show how everything from kin group organization, trade, customary law, and water control, to mythology, architecture, iconography, and cremation combines to a dramatized statement of a distinct form of political theory, a particular conception of what status, power, authority, and government are and should be: namely, a replication of the world of the gods that is at the same time a template for that of men. The state enacts an image of order that—a model for its beholders, in and of itself—orders society. On the other hand (the Turner one), as the populace at large does not merely view the state's expressions as so many gaping spectators but is caught up bodily in them, and especially in the great, mass ceremonies—political operas of Burgundian dimensions—which form their heart, the sort of "we surrender and are changed" power of drama to shape experience is the strong force that holds the polity together. Reiterated form, staged and acted by its own audience, makes (to a degree, for no theater ever wholly works) theory fact.

But my point is that some of those fit to judge work of this kind ought to be humanists who reputedly know something about what theater and mimesis and rhetoric are, and not just with respect to my work but to that of the whole steadily broadening stream of social analyses in which

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the drama analogy is, in one form or another, governing. At a time when social scientists are chattering about actors, scenes, plots, performances, and personae, and humanists are mumbling about motives, authority, persuasion, exchange, and hierarchy, the line between the two, however comforting to the puritan on the one side and the cavalier on the other, seems uncertain indeed.

IV

The text analogy now taken up by social scientists is, in some ways, the broadest of the recent refigurations of social theory, the most venturesome, and the least well developed. Even more than "game" or "drama," "text" is a dangerously unfocused term, and its application to social action, to people's behavior toward other people, involves a thoroughgoing conceptual wrench, a particularly outlandish bit of "seeing-as." Describing human conduct in the analogy of player and counterplayer, or of actor and audience, seems, whatever the pitfalls, rather more natural than describing it in that of writer and reader. Prima facie, the suggestion that the activities of spies, lovers, witch doctors, kings, or mental patients are moves or performances is surely a good deal more plausible than the notion that they are sentences.

But prima facie is a dubious guide when it comes to analogizing; were it not, we should still be thinking of the heart as a furnace and the lungs as bellows. The text analogy has some unapparent advantages still insufficiently exploited, and the surface dissimilarity of the here-we-are-and-there-we-are of social interaction to the solid composure of lines on a page is what gives it—or can when the disaccordance is rightly aligned—its interpretive force.

The key to the transition from text to text analogue, from writing as discourse to action as discourse, is, as Paul Ricoeur has pointed out, the concept of "inscription": the fixation of meaning. When we speak, our utterances fly by as events like any other behavior; unless what we say is inscribed in writing (or some other established recording process), it is as evanescent as what we do. If it is so inscribed, it of course passes, like Dorian Gray's youth, anyway; but at least its meaning—the *said*, not the *saying*—to a degree and for a while remains. This too is not different for action in general: its meaning can persist in a way its actuality cannot.

The great virtue of the extension of the notion of text beyond things written on paper or carved into stone is that it trains attention on precisely this phenomenon: on how the inscription of action is brought about, what its vehicles are and how they work, and on what the fixation of meaning from the flow of events—history from what happened, thought from thinking, culture from behavior—implies for sociological

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interpretation. To see social institutions, social customs, social changes as in some sense "readable" is to alter our whole sense of what such interpretation is toward modes of thought rather more familiar to the translator, the exegete, or the iconographer than to the test giver, the factor analyst, or the pollster.

All this comes out with exemplary vividness in the work of Alton Becker, a comparative linguist, on Javanese shadow puppetry, or the *wayang* as it is called. Wayang-ing (there is no other suitable verb) is, Becker says, a mode of text building, a way of putting symbols together to construct an expression. To construe it, to understand not just what it means but how it does so, one needs, he says, a new philology.

Philology, the text-centered study of language, as contrasted to linguistics, which is speech centered, has of course traditionally been concerned with making ancient or foreign or esoteric documents accessible to those for whom they are ancient or foreign or esoteric. Terms are glossed, notes appended, commentaries written, and, where necessary, transcriptions made and translations effected—all toward the end of producing an annotated edition as readable as the philologist can make it. Meaning is fixed at a meta-level; essentially what a philologist, a kind of secondary author, does is re-inscribe: interpret a text with a text.

Left at this, matters are straightforward enough, however difficult they may turn out to be in practice. But when philological concern goes beyond routinized craft procedures (authentication, reconstruction, annotation) to address itself to conceptual questions concerning the nature of texts as such—that is, to questions about their principles of construction—simplicity flees. The result, Becker notes, has been the shattering of philology, itself by now a near obsolescent term, into disjunct and rivalrous specialties, and most particularly the growth of a division between those who study individual texts (historians, editors, critics—who like to call themselves humanists), and those who study the activity of creating texts in general (linguists, psychologists, ethnographers—who like to call themselves scientists). The study of inscriptions is severed from the study of inscribing, the study of fixed meaning is severed from the study of the social processes that fix it. The result is a double narrowness. Not only is the extension of text analysis to non-written materials blocked, but so is the application of sociological analysis to written ones.

The repair of this split and the integration of the study of how texts are built, how the said is rescued from its saying, into the study of social phenomena—Apache jokes, English meals, African cult sermons, American high schools, Indian caste, or Balinese widow burning, to mention some recent attempts aside from Becker's—is what the "new philology," or whatever else it eventually comes to be called, is all about. "In a multicultured world," Becker writes, "a world of multiple epistemologies,

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there is need for a new philologist—a specialist in contextual relations—in all areas of knowledge in which text-building . . . is a central activity: literature, history, law, music, politics, psychology, trade, even war and peace."

Becker sees four main orders of semiotic connection in a social text for his new philologist to investigate: the relation of its parts to one another; the relation of it to others culturally or historically associated with it; the relation of it to those who in some sense construct it; and the relation of it to realities conceived as lying outside of it. Certainly there are others—its relation to its *materia*, for one; and, more certainly yet, even these raise profound methodological issues so far only hesitantly addressed. "Coherence," "inter-textuality," "intention," and "reference"—which are what Becker's four relations more or less come down to—all become most elusive notions when one leaves the paragraph or page for the act or institution. Indeed, as Nelson Goodman has shown, they are not all that well-defined for the paragraph or page, to say nothing of the picture, the melody, the statue, or the dance. Insofar as the theory of meaning implied by this multiple contextualization of cultural phenomena (some sort of symbolic constructivism) exists at all, it does so as a catalogue of wavering intimations and half-joined ideas.

How far this sort of analysis can go beyond such specifically expressive matters as puppetry, and what adjustments it will have to make in doing so, is, of course, quite unclear. As "life is a game" proponents tend to gravitate toward face-to-face interaction, courtship and cocktail parties, as the most fertile ground for their sort of analysis, and "life is a stage" proponents are attracted toward collective intensities, carnivals and insurrections, for the same reason, so "life is a text" proponents incline toward the examination of imaginative forms: jokes, proverbs, popular arts. There is nothing either surprising or reprehensible in this; one naturally tries one's analogies out where they seem most likely to work. But their long-run fates surely rest on their capacity to move beyond their easier initial successes to harder and less predictable ones—of the game idea to make sense of worship, the drama idea to explicate humor, or the text idea to clarify war. Most of these triumphs, if they are to occur at all, are, in the text case even more than the others, still to come. For the moment, all the apologist can do is what I have done here: offer up some instances of application, some symptoms of trouble, and some pleas for help.

V

So much, anyway, for examples. Not only do these particular three analogies obviously spill over into one another as individual writers tack

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back and forth between ludic, dramatistic, and textualist idioms, but there are other humanistic analogies on the social science scene at least as prominent as they: speech act analyses following Austin and Searle; discourse models as different as those of Habermas's "communicative competence" and Foucault's "archaeology of knowledge"; representationalist approaches taking their lead from the cognitive aesthetics of Cassirer, Langer, Gombrich, or Goodman; and of course Lévi-Strauss's higher cryptology. Nor are they as yet internally settled and homogeneous: the divisions between the play-minded and the strategy-minded to which I alluded in connection with the game approach, and between the ritualists and the rhetoricians in connection with the drama approach, are more than matched in the text approach by the collisions between the against-interpretation mandarins of deconstructionism and the symbolic-domination tribunes of neo-Marxism. Matters are neither stable nor consensual, and they are not likely soon to become so. The interesting question is not how all this muddle is going to come magnificently together, but what does all this ferment mean.

One thing it means is that, however raggedly, a challenge is being mounted to some of the central assumptions of mainstream social science. The strict separation of theory and data, the "brute fact" idea; the effort to create a formal vocabulary of analysis purged of all subjective reference, the "ideal language" idea; and the claim to moral neutrality and the Olympian view, the "God's truth" idea—none of these can prosper when explanation comes to be regarded as a matter of connecting action to its sense rather than behavior to its determinants. The refiguration of social theory represents, or will if it continues, a sea change in our notion not so much of what knowledge is, but of what it is we want to know. Social events do have causes and social institutions effects; but it just may be that the road to discovering what we assert in asserting this lies less through postulating forces and measuring them than through noting expressions and inspecting them.

The turn taken by an important segment of social scientists, from physical process analogies to symbolic form ones, has introduced a fundamental debate into the social science community concerning not just its methods but its aims. It is a debate that grows daily in intensity. The golden age (or perhaps it was only the brass) of the social sciences when, whatever the differences in theoretical positions and empirical claims, the basic goal of the enterprise was universally agreed upon—to find out the dynamics of collective life and alter them in desired directions—has clearly passed. There are too many social scientists at work today for whom the anatomization of thought is wanted, not the manipulation of behavior.

But it is not only for the social sciences that this alteration in how we

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think about how we think has disequilibrating implications. The rising interest of sociologists, anthropologists, psychologists, political scientists, and even now and then a rogue economist in the analysis of symbol systems poses—implicitly anyway, explicitly sometimes—the question of the relationship of such systems to what goes on in the world; and it does so in a way both rather different from what humanists are used to and rather less evadable—with homilies about spiritual values and the examined life—than many of them, so it seems, would at all like.

If the social technologist notion of what a social scientist is is brought into question by all this concern with sense and signification, even more so is the cultural watchdog notion of what a humanist is. The specialist without spirit dispensing policy nostrums goes, but the lectern sage dispensing approved judgments does as well. The relation between thought and action in social life can no more be conceived of in terms of wisdom than it can in terms of expertise. How it is to be conceived, how the games, dramas, or texts which we do not just invent or witness but live, have the consequence they do remains very far from clear. It will take the wariest of wary reasonings, on all sides of all divides, to get it clearer.

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Well-Found Poem

DONALD DAVIE

Of tried goodness, merit, or value—1887
—Oxford English Dictionary

"We last of Yugoslav
Air force. Please tell Alex.
we coming." Signal received
21st April 1941 by
H.M.S. Chekla, towing,
somewhere south of Crete:
"the
port quarter fairlead was
used, because *Desmoulea*
would be sheering
violently to starboard, and
if the fairlead should collapse, the
wire would bring up against
the portside of the steering-engine house
against which it was hoped
to hold it by a heavy
shackle (around the wire)
on a chain, with a tackle rove
to bowse it against the house."

These are zones of language, zones
of the affecting universe
of Pepys's English prose and Dryden's verse.

The use of the slip-hook made it
impossible to
"freshen the nip"

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of the towing wire
through the fairlead, but

so they managed that ship.

* * *

At Ostend's
evacuation, "one
lady who threatened to go
into labor unless she sailed
in a destroyer." This
"pleasure she was accorded but
without result."
By which
he means presumably
labor was not averted;
the lady was delivered
safely of a nine-
or eight-and-a-half-pound fruit
of pleasure once accorded:
sturdy destroyer, male.

* * *

"To reestablish tactics and
the skills of command . . ."

precision-guided missiles
favor it; so far from
"push-button warfare," the problem
is, with them,
no longer to
"hit early and keep on hitting"
but knowing what it is
you hit, and what happens to it;

as for instance Mr.
Wilson, Commissioned Gunner,

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"had had his face blown away";
"unable to move him," nor
"had I the time,"
"left him covered with a blanket."

* * *

We last of Yugoslav
Air force. Please tell
Alexandria,
Athens, Rome
in a violet light

we coming. Oberleutnant
Prell is coming, and
Commissioned Gunner Wilson
is coming, and

tactics and the skills
of command are coming and

these are zones of language and

we would not have it otherwise. The cities
form and re-form in the violet light, and

his face had been blown away and
we would not have it otherwise, destroyers

male, and tell Alex. we
coming, we always coming:

" . . . these brave men . . . "

DONALD DAVIE, professor of English at Vanderbilt University, is the author of *Articulate Energy*. His *Collected Poems* was published in 1972.

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Cops and Writers

JEAN HOLLANDER

TWO YEARS AGO the chairman of the English department at Trenton State College asked me to take over a class in the short story for policemen in Plainfield. I agreed, not quite certain whether or not I really wanted to. Although I had taught adult classes before, I had for the last few years been teaching mainly college freshmen. Now the thought of confronting a class of policemen was enough to shake my accustomed sense of authority. Getting lost on my way to Plainfield and thus arriving late for the first class did not help to calm me. Even more disturbing than the roomful of bulging, brawny cops (and they do loom large in the small seats of classrooms) that I had envisioned was the handful of seven resentful men waiting for me. To make things more awkward, they were expecting the male teacher listed in the catalogue, not the floundering, nervous female who entered. Fortunately, I had come prepared with copies of Kafka's "The Judgment," a difficult text at best. While they read, I had time to regain my breath and my bearing. And they, struck by the strange plot and confusing details, realized that they required help to solve the riddles posed by such an unfamiliar piece of writing. When I had previously tried to teach the story to freshmen at Trenton State College, they had been both baffled and bored by it. Although Princeton University students had been more interested in the story, many found the principal theme of universal guilt unconvincing. But here the class went well. By the time the policemen and I were finished asking many questions and supplying some answers, it seemed to me that we had covered the major aspects of Kafka's enigmatic tale.

Afterward I thought about the reasons for the success of that first class. Perhaps these policemen's much-discussed need for authority was reflected in the basic structure of the Kafka story: the victory of the father figure symbolized by the son's obedience to his father's death sentence upon him. But in the story the father's fall, even as the sentence is being carried out, is hardly a triumph of authority. Surely their understanding of the son's subtle guilt, which is unrelated to the real or imagined neglect of his father, speaks for a more sensitive understanding of

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moral responsibility than cops are usually given credit for. Interestingly, they also had a much more immediate grasp of the humor in Kafka's writing than most students do. Having themselves often been involved in events that entail so much terror or horror, these men had learned how to use irony to make those situations bearable. Being unable to respond emotionally to the ugliness of some scenes which they were forced to confront had taught them distance. They knew that one way to bear the unbearable is to laugh at it. Kafka's mixture of the grotesque and the serious, of surreal events described with minute realistic details and seemingly mundane realities that suddenly refuse to obey the rules of existence did not surprise them. They could laugh at the father hopping about on the bed flipping up the ends of his dressing gown. They readily understood the macabre complexity involved in his judgment, its wild parody of Jehovah and its simultaneous psychological necessity. Later in the term, they had no problem appreciating both the pathos and the humor in the scene in which a charwoman throws away the dried-out beetle that once was Gregor, the protagonist, in Kafka's "Metamorphosis."

My task that term was to make them understand some of the subtler ways writers communicate their meanings. For their part, they tried, sometimes quite vehemently, to explain some of the crudities of experience which they found in the reading. There is no way of gauging how well I learned their lessons—but they were impressive in their quickness to use whatever clues for interpretation I gave them. Each man's eye and memory for detail was remarkable. Their understanding of human behavior and motivation, of the various reactions possible to any given situation, made every class an unpredictable but always interesting experience. Although they soon allowed me a superior knowledge of the technical aspects of literature, in the interpretation of characters or the experiential meaning of a story they were less likely to yield; they felt that in the understanding of human nature they were more qualified than I.

It was, then, with eagerness that I accepted another assignment in the same police program a year later to teach a course called "Experiencing Literature." This time I knew what to expect. The syllabus I devised was much longer and more difficult than the one usually given at the college, although it followed the general outline of the introductory course. During eleven three-hour meetings we studied twenty short stories, fifty-eight poems, and five plays. Some of the stories were not easy to understand, nor did they all even qualify as short. They included Hawthorne's "Young Goodman Brown," Faulkner's "The Bear" and "A Rose for Emily," Hemingway's "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber," Flannery O'Connor's "A Good Man Is Hard to Find," James

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Joyce's "Araby," and Franz Kafka's "The Metamorphosis." The poets we read began with "Anonymous" (ballads), through Shakespeare's sonnets, Donne, Herrick, Marvell, Keats, Shelley, Coleridge, Blake, Browning, Whitman, Dickinson, and continued to Yeats, Hopkins, Eliot, Dylan Thomas, Frost, Anthony Hecht, and Allen Ginsberg. In the weeks devoted to the drama, we read *Oedipus Rex* and *Antigone,* a short medieval play called *Quem Quaeritis,* John Millington Synge's *Riders to the Sea,* Ionesco's *The Gap,* and ended with Shakespeare's *Othello.* Although I told them that I had made the course more difficult than the equivalent class at the college, they never complained. In fact, they took it as a matter of pride, feeling that this heavier reading load proved that they had more mettle than the other students. Despite the long hours and nervous strain of their police work, they were usually well prepared and attended classes regularly except when they were on duty or had to appear in court.

I decided to begin the term's work with the short story since that form would be the easiest for them, not only because most of their reading up to then had probably been in that genre, but also because a study of the reaction of people to various situations was something they relied on in their daily work. For instance, they had to be able to predict how others would react to their directives and interventions before deciding on their own form of action; they had to be able to take in the details of a situation quickly and correctly before intervening. No matter how factual and sparse police reports may seem to us, they must make use of a selection of vital detail, similar to that which a writer of a short story has to make.

This was taught to me by one of my students, a captain, at the end of the term. I had begun the study of the short story by stressing the differences between a factual report, such as a scientist's or a policeman's report, and the presentation of a creative writer. While a selection of necessary details is involved in both, the officer must remain neutral and clearly try to present a picture of the facts, while the artist usually begins with a preconceived message or attitude which is then transmitted through the use of carefully selected details of action described in words intended to provoke associations and emotional reactions in the reader. Only at the end of the term did the captain point out to me that he and his men also try to evaluate the events they describe and that their description of a sequence of events must of necessity be structured and colored by their understanding of what has taken place.

The policemen's reactions to events and characters in the stories were surprisingly unprejudiced. Forms of behavior that most of us—in our narrow-mindedness—expect policemen to object to were accepted without hesitation. They did not object to writers whose stories had to

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do with their protagonist's rebellion against society's accepted values. Nor did stories in which the strong father becomes the villain and in which our usual ideals of manhood are turned around offend them. The many hunters among my students readily granted the message in those hunting tales in which sensitivity triumphs over male aggressiveness, stories that show the boy becoming a man because he *fails* to shoot the deer, goose, or catbird. The only characters they did object to were those they thought unrealistic. As the previous class had done, this one also excelled in interpreting the ways in which characters reveal themselves, subtly manipulate and influence each other; they, too, understood how the story usually saves its insight, its revelation, for the end.

This almost instinctive grasp of the writing of fiction was revealed when the policemen volunteered to write their own short stories. Although warned that this assignment would have very little bearing on their term grades, they put obvious effort into the task, and some wrote stories of ten or fifteen pages. They not only took great pains with plot and character, but with style and language. The stories were surprisingly well written, revealing an understanding of what a solid short story must contain: the revelation of character, the use of background description and language to create atmosphere and mood, the need to sustain suspense and yet make each event as it occurs seem natural, the insight achieved either by the characters in the story or the reader or both. They tended to favor surprise endings. Some stories were sheer fantasies, or derived from previous reading, films, or television shows. Most wrote stories, obviously based on their own experiences, that revealed the amazing distance they must put between their personal lives and their work, which is part of the training for being a good cop. These stories, as well as their discussions of them, showed how coolly they judged their own weaknesses as well as the humor with which they accepted some of the difficulties or injustices of existence. Despite their authors' unmistakable sense of irony and awareness of corruption, these stories demonstrated how clearly, almost naively, these policemen wanted to continue to believe in some of the so-called American virtues—that courage is worth the effort and will be admired; that hard work will be rewarded; that life is somehow good; and that, despite the weariness, boredom, and occasional ugliness and danger, despite all their dislike of most of their routine and despite their own occasional grousing and complaints, they somehow did like being cops; that life, even in a chaotic and violent world, is worth it after all.

The stories also revealed varieties of unexpected sympathies and understanding. An officer who had recently arrested a sexual offender wrote a sympathetic account of the events and emotions leading up to the offense from the arrested man's point of view. Another officer, who

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had been incensed when called upon in a particularly sad case of child neglect and abuse—about which he was unable to do anything in real life—had his protagonist policeman, with deliberate wish fulfillment, shoot the mother because she reminded him of his own mother. One man wrote of a heroic arrest by a rookie who gets the admiration of all bystanders for this deed and affirms how good it feels to have done the "right thing" even at risk to one's life. (I later learned that this new man had indeed been present at a similar situation, but had acted in the routine, prescribed manner—that is, without any unnecessary risks or heroics.) Another described a boring day in the life of a cop, which begins with his not wanting to go on duty and counting the days to retirement, but ends with his realization that he likes his job after all. A student whom I knew to be an avid hunter had his hunter protagonist suddenly see the beauty and sacredness of all life as he lies dying in the woods.

These stories revealed an impressive willingness to see the other side, even while taking a firm stand on one side. Aware that the big man who goes berserk in a bar will be sorry he has hurt anyone the next morning, they, the cops, must cope with that awareness even as they go in to stop him. They must somehow use a minimum of force to subdue him, knowing him to be twice as strong as anybody else and not very reasonable at that moment. When they answer the call to a family feud involving a wife beating, policemen know that the moment they intervene and try to arrest the man, the very victim will become protective of him and turn on the arresting officer, frequently with a weapon. Their stories made me realize that most of them chose their profession, not out of a need to bully, but out of a sincere respect for order, a conviction that there is a right way to behave and that law and order are valid components of the good life. Most denied at least the frequency of police brutality. Those that did admit to the temptation of such illegal abuse explained the stress of these situations.

The segment of the course devoted to the study of poetry proved for them the most trying part of our reading list. For most students in regular programs, the challenge in learning to read poetry is to discover that interpretation is not a free-floating exercise in fantasy. That was not the problem in this class. Their training had prepared them for the fact that all interpretations and conclusions must be based on details taken from the text. But they resented having to rely on the verbal implications, the delicacies of tone, the unreliable shadings through which poetry communicates. I began this section of the course with narrative poetry, since I thought that the story line and revelation of character found in such poetry would yield more readily to the methods of investigation with which they were already familiar from our study of the short story. Perhaps the change in form was too abrupt, or the dialects used in the early

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ballads too strange. The diction in Browning's "My Last Duchess" seemed stilted and obscure to them. The archaic, ornate vocabulary of Shelley and Keats confused and displeased them. Some had trouble hearing the rhythms, the stressed and unstressed beats of a line.

But even here, frustrated by what they considered a lack of clear details, they underestimated their own understanding. I was continually amazed and impressed by their ability to understand the literal meaning of the most difficult poems. Donne's "The Flea" was quickly seen to be a poem about seduction. They easily understood that in the sonnet "Batter My Heart" the speaker wishes to reform, to get closer to God. Their difficulty, as for most students, lay in accepting Donne's metaphysical forcing of two opposing ideas into one image or word. Either their religious beliefs or a narrower sense of what is fitting made Donne's forced fusion of religious and sexual passion offensive to them. While they might not all have been regular churchgoers, most of the men seem to have had some faith in God or a belief in an afterlife, and this merging of sex and salvation surprised and even shocked them.

To test whether the policemen had learned a method of approaching poetry rather than merely repeating given explanations, I asked them, as part of an examination, to interpret a very difficult poem, "God's Grandeur" by Gerard Manley Hopkins. They had no trouble deciding on the basic message of the poem. They also did well in discovering the complexities in some of Hopkins's metaphors. I had asked them to focus on certain key words—for example, the word *charged* in the opening line, "The world is charged with the grandeur of God." They did well in rendering the varieties of meaning that word gives the statement, citing references to debts, electricity, command, and power. But they had trouble seeing how metaphors structure a poem. They did not, for instance, go on to say that in the line "And for all this, nature is never spent," the word *spent* continues the idea of debt and power introduced in the earlier image. Despite their complaints about how difficult the language and metaphors in most of the poems were, they all decided that Matthew Arnold's "Dover Beach" was a better poem than Anthony Hecht's parody "The Dover Bitch," although Hecht's came closer to their own speech patterns.

In the drama selections, they again surprised me by rejecting Synge's modern, rather easily understood *Riders to the Sea* as uninteresting. Perhaps the play's message of failure and despair, against which Synge holds us all to be helpless, displeased them. Perhaps a universe in which nature and the sea are deemed enemies was alien to their own experience. On the other hand, the ancient dilemmas found in *Oedipus Rex*—character versus fate, man against the gods, crime and the acceptance of guilt—did interest them. There were the usual discussions of justice. Was Oedipus's

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punishment too great for a crime committed in ignorance? Although the law they themselves enforced clearly differentiates between accident and intention, between involuntary manslaughter and a planned murder, their conclusions were by no means uniform. For despite our commonly held stereotypes of law enforcement officers, their views on most political and legal issues were broad. The range of their attitudes was even more apparent in our discussion of the play *Antigone.* Antigone's rebellion against Creon's rule, her need to uphold a higher moral order against his edict, aroused surprising sympathy and agreement. A group of cops seemed a strange assembly in which to find such strong feelings against authority and such admiration for this symbolic forerunner of women's liberation. Although Creon's view was very well presented by one of the more voluble and witty students in the class, the majority of the group favored Antigone, choosing an unwritten code over the law of the land and a higher moral plane over that of political expediency.

Despite the difficulty in language that reading Shakespeare's *Othello* represented, the mystery of Iago's motivation and his success in manipulating Othello led to some of our most interesting discussions. As in the study of the short story, the students' understanding of personality, of how people react to given situations was forceful and exciting. They judged Shakespeare's play a more worthy subject of study than Ionesco's *The Gap,* which puzzled and bored them. While their comments showed that they largely understood what Ionesco was trying to say, that message seemed trivial and unnecessary to them. This judgment was similar to their reactions to some minor contemporary poems we read. Their jeers and laughter indicated that, although they understood the message of such poems as Don L. Lee's "But He Was Cool or; he even stopped for green lights" and of X. J. Kennedy's "In a Prominent Bar in Secaucus One Day," this was not the sort of thing they came to class for after a full day on the job.

Tired from the day's work, with barely time to eat before class began, leaving wives, children, loves, friends, television, and beer behind them, these policemen did not come to class to rehearse the familiar. They came to learn something new, to learn new ways of thinking and observing that were generally lacking in their daily lives. Yet somehow their own daily involvement with the harsher realities of life made it even more necessary for them to hold on to certain ideals. I would sometimes sense a kind of wonder and gratitude coming from them that their wives were not like some of the women they must deal with in the performance of their duties, and an irrational insistence that this be so. The artificial barrier between the kind of women they arrested and the others must be the more defended the more intangible and fragile it was. In this connection, there was a strange courtliness in the language they used to

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address me, so different from the way they would speak among themselves.

The classes not only taught me greater respect for the intelligence and integrity of these men, but they also gave me insight into the complexities which they must encounter and survive each day. I came to see how their own rebelliousness fights against fitting into the immediate authoritarian structure of their superiors, how they resent, even while they obey, foolish rules and frivolous expectations. They must control and hide their own objections to discipline when they confront these same needs in others. They must understand and predict the resistance others feel against obeying their orders, while at the same time denying that understanding in order to elicit the proper response from those around them. Confronting violence, they must somehow strive to respond without violence. Feeling fear, they are not allowed to behave as though they were afraid. Seeing madness, they may not set their own fantasies free. Exposed to repeated evidence of corruption in others, they may not take corruption as natural. Confronted during their working hours with the horrors men and women inflict on each other and on their children, they must come home and erase these visions from their minds. Once they remove their uniforms, they must somehow resume connubial habits, renew their faith in the general goodness of their wives and children. I do not know whether divorce statistics for policemen and criminal records of their offspring differ from those of other families, but one could not be with them for long without appreciating how much harder it must be for a policeman to come home and be willing to suspend his disbelief, to not disturb the smiling surfaces of family relationships or see the potential corruption in those around him.

I saw them practice a similar control every time the class gathered. Some men were still in uniform, some had a gun bulging here or there, some were very tired, having just put in hours of testifying in court or on extra duty. I would overhear them discussing a recent suicide, a particularly bloody murder scene, an ugly family brawl, a case of child neglect, and then put all such thoughts aside as the class began. All the corruption they confronted daily did not keep them from being interested in why Iago does what he does. Is he innately evil as Satan is and cannot help himself? Does he get pleasure out of hurting others? Is he a practical man expressing his resentment at being passed over for promotion? Does he enjoy the sense of power that his manipulation of others gives him? Did he mean to commit only one act that forces him to worse deeds to cover his tracks? Is he a man caught in his own web? Another time, they would put their immediate experience of violence, danger, and hostility aside to puzzle over the speaker in Frost's poem "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening." Is he only a tired man who still

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has work to do? Or do Frost's images signify other meanings? What do the miles he still must go stand for, and just what sort of sleep is the poet referring to? Do the woods symbolize larger themes of morality? Of mortality?

Like Frost's poem, many of the works we studied offered the revelation and acceptance of mortality as a major insight. For the young students in most literature classes, this theme of our universal fate needs to be developed slowly and pursued gingerly, since to most college students the possibility of their own death is still something of an academic abstraction. In this particular class, although these students never objected to its presence, I became aware of the cruelty of that persistent message. They were too disciplined and too polite to point out how commonplace the vulnerability of the flesh was in their daily routine. But perhaps these discussions were one reason why they enjoyed the classes. Here they could escape to a situation where violent deeds became part of a formal system we could all discuss, reason about, and justify. If most of us, who are only rarely forced to confront our own mortality, need the catharsis that art provides, how much more must policemen, who live amid the chaos of unpredictable violence, need it. In the literary setting we were safe and could calmly evaluate and consider the violent events in which characters condemn each other to death, take their own lives, put out their own eyes, and accept guilts, vague and specific. In the classroom we could make judgments that might the next moment be undone without a trace, without harm to anyone, without the tightened throat and the accelerated heartbeat. Antigone or Creon? What are their motivations? Whose actions are higher in the scale of morality? Soothing inquiry, this, after walking or driving their "beat" in the uniform that leaves men naked.

Perhaps the great frequency and variety of class response was the result of this emotional and intellectual need. Perhaps sharing the same profession, the same concerns and frustrations made these men feel more at ease with one another, made them more willing to respond even when they were unsure of the correctness of an answer. True, being older and more accustomed to being listened to, they didn't suffer the agonies of shyness fighting against the need for self-assertion that so often trouble the young student. Perhaps the very personality traits that made them choose their profession—a willingness to assume authority, to tell others what to do, and, to some extent, what to think—enabled them to take a more aggressive part in class. Whatever the reasons, discussions tended to be more exciting, with many different views being offered by more people than in most college classes. The only silent students were those who, pressed by job or family problems, had not done a particular assignment. Even the generally shy students (and to my surprise I found that

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there are shy policemen) would be suddenly forced by conviction or disagreement to speak up.

Another interesting aspect of our special situation was the obliteration of rank in the classroom. Different interpretations and impressions were argued out, with only my greater knowledge of the "facts" and more years of having studied these matters counting occasionally and convincingly in my favor. All term long, my only discriminations among them as individuals involved questions of who was prepared more thoroughly, or had greater insight, or could express himself better or more frequently. It was not until we gathered at my house to celebrate the end of term, not until we were in a social setting in which the discussion ranged to more personal attitudes and experiences, that I became aware of their ranks—there were a sergeant and a captain in the group—obviously very important distinctions in their professional lives.

The Law Enforcement Education Program at Trenton State College, in which I was involved, was instituted about eight years ago at the request of the Plainfield Police Department. Unlike so many foundering adult education programs these days, this one is self-supporting and succeeds because of the interest, dedication, and energy of the participants. Although most of the men attend classes four evenings a week, it usually takes them almost eight years to obtain a degree. Since most of the courses offered are in the area of their special interest, criminal justice, rather than the humanities, I have not been involved in the program for the past semester. But a recent Steiner cartoon in *The New Yorker* reminded me what fun it had been to teach literature to the cops of Piscataway and Plainfield. The cartoon shows two burly policemen about to arrest a sorry-looking criminal. The caption has one of the officers, who is holding a book in his hand, saying, "First I'm going to read you your rights, then I'm going to read you a brief passage from *The Merchant of Venice.*" I doubt whether any of my former students are now going about their duties reciting *Othello.* But I do think that some of what we have read and discussed remains with them. And I, too, have learned and remember.

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CCNY Days

MORRIS FREEDMAN

CITY COLLEGE OF NEW YORK in the decades from the 1920s through the 1950s—but particularly during the 1930s—has achieved something close to mythical status in accounts of twentieth-century American higher education. It was an important, even a decisive, experience for many of that school's students, of whom I was one. Yet when I hear CCNY talked about today, I realize that this particular patch of the past has been transmuted, so that it has come to seem quite golden. Before things proceed much further in this mythifying direction, perhaps it is time to look again at the everyday reality of CCNY, which, while it wasn't altogether dross, was not gold either.

My time as an undergraduate at City College, in the late thirties, was not happy, although I earned high grades and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa and awarded the English medal. Some of my deepest friendships go back to those years and I remember a few of my teachers with affection and respect, but on the whole it is a period about which I feel uncomfortable. Every so often I realize I have blocked much of it from memory, although I will suddenly recall some details with an unnatural vividness. The dominant tones of that landscape remain gray, black, and dirty white, like the medieval stone buildings of the Convent Avenue campus itself.

I went to college, in those last years of the Depression, from 1938 to 1941, as much for lack of anything better to do as with any particular goal in mind. I thought vaguely of a civil service job. For all the cockiness I showed as Big Man at Evander Childs High School in the Bronx, in my English and speech classes and working on the newspaper and literary magazine, I also developed a conviction of the lotterylike improbability of passing the New York City qualifying tests for high school teachers. Teaching in high school seemed an implausible ambition for me to fulfill, although it was as close to any ambition as I allowed myself to have at that time. Of the eight or so English teachers I had had at Evander, only one had been Jewish. It was understood in the thirties that

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New York natives could not readily pass the oral tests for high school jobs, since our accent and intonation were defined as substandard. In any case, the tests were infrequently given. Evander had one black on its huge faculty; he taught Spanish and was said to be Cuban. Many of my own teachers were qualified enough to teach in college, with doctorates and significant publications.

I did accept it as a given, as inevitable, that I'd go on to college after Evander. Applying for admission to City College was routine; acceptance for most of us was a foregone conclusion, much as going to high school had been after finishing the eighth grade. I did not have to take an entrance examination, as Morris Raphael Cohen had to do several decades earlier; and it did not occur to me, as it did to my more economically better-off contemporaries, to apply to, say, the University of Michigan or Wisconsin or Iowa, where tuition fees were minimal. Tuition, of course, was free at CCNY, and other fees negligible. I was not knowing enough to think of scholarships to Columbia or NYU and to prepare myself appropriately for them. I had no image of a college man, let alone that of a CCNY or Yale or Ohio State man. In short, such thoughts as I had about college were vague, and I spent the summer after high school visiting the Sixth Avenue employment agencies.

Late in August, the week or so before classes were to begin, I found a job as a delivery boy for a fancy millinery maker just off Fifth Avenue. When I got my first weekly pay envelope—containing ten dollars, out of which I had to give two to the employment agency—my immediate boss, the head shipping clerk, urged me not to give up college for this sort of pay. I didn't need much urging, and I happily quit in the full flush of the security the crisp bills gave me.

The money indeed lasted me a while. Although I could count on a place to sleep and on meals at home, I could expect little else—no funds for books or clothes or an occasional movie. My father would have supported me in whatever I tried to do at that time. My mother would have helped with meals and kept whatever clothes I had in repair. But it was plain that I would be a burden if I didn't assume some responsibility for my own support. All this was understood without a word said; I was not really conscious of being poor, let alone self-conscious about it. That was in 1938.

My financial pressures that first freshman semester were substantial. The round-trip subway fare then was only a dime, and although for fifteen cents one could get on campus a memorably generous and highly seasoned chopped liver sandwich, I was pressed to raise even this daily quarter, especially after I had paid for books. I remember spending an afternoon in the bookstalls which then ran on both sides of Fourth Ave-

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nue from around Eighth Street to Union Square, looking for copies of my required texts. I was elated to find a battered copy of Horace's poems for a dime and a gold-edged translation of Dante's *Inferno* for a quarter. I needed only the former, but I bought both. My father, a bookbinder, repaired them, using oilcloth for the covers and old wallpaper for the endpapers. I also applied on campus for a loan of ten dollars, specifically to buy pants and shoes. Before it was approved, I received notice from *Scholastic Magazine*, the national publication distributed to high schools, that I had won three prizes in their annual literary contest, two of which carried awards of five dollars each. (Twenty-five years later, my son won one of these same prizes, except that he got fifty dollars.)

The student loan program was supervised by a Teutonic speech professor who wore his gray hair *en brosse*, pince-nez spectacles on a black string, and a striped suit with an enormous gold chain festooned over his vest. He was short and walked with military erectness (although not quite leaning back, like the genial French teacher I had, who was a graduate of Saint-Cyr). His heels clicked sharply on the college's cement floors. He had a name like Schmidt or Mueller. When I brought in my loan application, which showed what I needed the money for, he was seated imperially behind his desk. He asked me to turn around and show him the bottoms of my shoes. I turned, lifted one foot then the other, and he dismissed me.

When he sent word to me that my request had been granted, I made a point of going to his office to say that I was withdrawing the application. He seemed upset and asked why I didn't want the loan. I told him I had won ten dollars in the *Scholastic* contest. He congratulated me and said I could still have the money. I said "No, thanks." I got some little pleasure out of rejecting the loan in this way, but the real satisfaction came in not having to carry the burden of repayment.

Early the next semester the New York State Board of Regents notified me that I could expect to be getting fifty dollars a semester for my four years in college—the result of my scores on the statewide high school proficiency examinations. I also began tutoring high school students throughout the city, and from then on I had no serious problem with finances. Occasionally I shared a textbook with a fellow student, and I chose physics as my required laboratory science because the fees were less for that subject than for chemistry or biology, the alternatives.

I suppose the most serious problem I had as a student was overcoming my sense of being an outsider, of not being wanted at the school, of being grudgingly tolerated, of being a kind of benign nuisance to the faculty and administration. Of course, as I was to discover when I became a professor and occasional administrator myself, students every-

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where often feel this way and are often so regarded. This wasn't, in its large terms, exclusively a CCNY phenomenon. But it did ultimately contribute, I think, to the special defiant, independent, contentious, attention-seeking qualities so commonly associated with the CCNY graduates of those years.

Perhaps precisely because college was so good a refuge for so many of us during the Depression, the registrar appeared to be intent on getting us out fast. Requirements for graduation were constantly being eased. You got rather generous allowance for high school work, and bonus credits for A's and B's were added to your record. I managed to remain in college for an additional semester by deliberately neglecting to register for required introductory courses in art history and economics until my third year. I didn't want to graduate in the winter, and this arrangement enabled me to finish in June. A clerk in the registrar's office was visibly annoyed at my getting to stay on for what he termed an "extra" semester, even though my total time at City—what with bonus credits and summer courses—turned out to be three and a half years. I entered with the class of 1942 but graduated with that of 1941.

Clerks were not alone in making us feel we were in college on sufferance. Janitors also contributed to this feeling. Often when we stood at the high tables in the basement eating area, our food laid out before us, a janitor would come along and sweep the surface clean, dropping unfinished food, drinks, napkins, brown paper bags, waxed paper into the huge garbage bins at the end of each table. The floors were rough cement, and I recall dust swirling in the air and into my nostrils as the janitors swept around and between our legs. A wide staircase at one end of the eating area led down to open toilets. Years later, when I was a graduate student at Columbia, Lionel Trilling asked me why City College always seemed to him to smell of urinals when he made his way through the halls to give a guest lecture.

Clerks and janitors during the Great Depression were, it must be remembered, a privileged class, having regular and protected employment. Faculty and administrators were veritable aristocrats. The president of CCNY during my freshman year set the tone. Whenever I saw Dr. Frederick B. Robinson, he wore a cutaway coat and striped trousers. His imperious bearing suggested that he had been ordained in power, as perhaps he had reason to feel. An evident mark of fortune during the thirties was a good job, let alone one with such rare perquisites as a high and protected salary, a secretary, and a chauffeur. He called students "guttersnipes" when he was not orating on patriotism to his captive audiences of freshmen in the Great Hall or greeting delegations of fascist academics from Italy.

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Dean Morton Gottschall, a diminutive man referred to as "Mortie" by students, did provide a kind of full-time counseling service. Although I had little to do with him, I felt good knowing that he was available to offer support and advice. Whatever problem you had, it was understood that all you had to do was wait in the daily long line to talk with him, and he would somehow resolve it, or at least ease your discomfort. Like so many myths, the legend of Mortie became tarnished by facts over the years, but early in my City College life the legend shone bright.

The message we got from most teachers was that if we hadn't been there in the first place, they wouldn't have had to be there either. I remember making the long subway trip to the campus on a minor Jewish holiday, to attend a course in which every lecture was critical. We admired the instructor for his meticulously organized, brilliant analyses of the English Romantic poets. On that day he popped his head into the classroom early, when only two or three of us had yet appeared, and announced that we would be glad to know he was dismissing the class, since so few students were present. It suddenly occurred to me that he was quite oblivious to one of the strikingly defining features about his students: we did not live in a nearby dormitory or fraternity house.

Still, he was one of the better teachers and kinder men I knew as a student. Like a surprising number of the English faculty, he did not have a doctorate. Unlike most of his colleagues, however—even those with a doctorate—he was an actively and solidly publishing scholar, critic, and biographer, probably the man best known outside the department at that time. He had a difficult time in his early years making it through the ranks, partly because he did not have a Ph.D.; perhaps because he did publish, thus exposing to comparison those who did not; and perhaps even because he was from New York and had gone to Columbia for his undergraduate work. In the twenties, thirties, and forties, CCNY favored new faculty from outside the city, so that New York students could be introduced to other than New York patterns of speech and general demeanor.

One immediate consequence of the cultural gap between the faculty and students majoring in English was that we were early made to feel uncouth, not only in our speech, manners, and dress but in our approaches to literature. The better students, for their part, regarded much of the faculty as a body of boobs with only a handful of redeeming heroes. I can see today that their view was obviously distorted, as to both the boobs and the heroes. But we came to realize this only with patient and careful discrimination, much of it exercised long after graduation, when we could more tolerantly mull over our earlier impressions and judgments.

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The nature of the English department revealed itself slowly. I recall becoming aware, over the years, of various oppositions: persons with tenure and those without; those with doctorates and those without; those who published and those who didn't; the factions in and out of power; the good teachers and the bad; the decent human beings and the bad ones.

The English department harbored some extravagantly eccentric persons. One man, who hoarded chocolate bars and toilet paper against a Communist takeover and spent much time calling in bets to his bookie on the office phone, wrote an abbreviated epic in galloping meter about Whirlaway winning the Kentucky Derby. It took one minute and forty-five seconds to read, he pointed out to his classes, the exact time it took the horse to run the race.

One of the larger and more cohesive factions was made up of instructors accused of being members of a Communist cell on campus. Some of these did not have tenure and were let go in the normal course of time; tenured faculty were fired with resultant legal resistance that dragged on for years. Although most of these persons were English faculty, I recall, I had only one as an instructor, Morris U. Schappes. I was disenchanted by his doctrinaire Marxist readings, and of course he was not especially impressed by me in class either. Nevertheless, all this seemed impersonal when he was charged with perjury at one point and I became chairman of the student body committee that rallied to support him.

It was not the Communist faculty who were troublesome, but the Communists in the student body. Although only a handful, they were the most dedicated and aggressive of missionaries—challenging teachers and deans whenever the occasion presented itself but concentrating especially and relentlessly on skeptical or indifferent fellow students. In the basement alcoves at City College—that dingy substitute for a student union—the party adherents held regular sway with booklets on tables, placards announcing rallies, speeches going on to nobody in particular. It took unusual courage or unusual apathy to remain outside the Communist church. Joining, in some form, was made to seem the only realistic demonstration of idealism and humanism. If you didn't join, you might be branded loudly and venomously as a fascist, a "trotskyite" (the party line was to use lowercase letters for epithets), and—perhaps worst of all—an ivory tower aesthete or wishy-washy liberal. Conservatives were very few in those days, if they surfaced at all.

The Trotskyists (as they called themselves—not "trotskyites," the Stalinist epithet for them) not only resisted the Communists successfully but flourished among themselves, and later in the world at large. The Trotskyists—who were never clearly demarcated, since there wasn't the

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same emphasis on organizational discipline among them as the Stalinists insisted upon—were augmented by students of various other leftist but anti-Stalinist persuasions, loosely designated as "socialist." No Maoists had yet emerged.

The Trotskyists and their associates were concentrated in the history department and in the social and political sciences. They pursued their intellectual lives with a heedless integrity, rather annoying the Stalinists with their indifference. They happily contended among themselves—vigorously, freely, openly, flexibly. As a result, they developed a breadth and confidence in their convictions that enabled them to become pioneers and leaders in a certain range of American academic and intellectual life. They resisted the reductive Stalinist discipline; they rejected the souring intolerance and defensive bitterness of Stalinist polemic. Among CCNY alumni, the celebrities of those golden years were not clustered in the humanities, which were largely the stronghold of the Stalinists, but in social science, political philosophy, history—in those disciplines where humanism is rooted necessarily in facts and realities, not in a willful, almost petulant ideology.

I remember some of this with a darkness of shading and with perhaps more discomfort than I felt at the time. My tutoring of high school students in outlying sections of the city—Astoria and Riverdale, for example—and reading to blind ones on campus kept me too busy to join the campus newspaper staff or to take part in any other extracurricular activity on a regular basis. It was in such places that the continuing battle with the Stalinists was fully joined. I don't think I simply avoided confrontation, although I am sure I must have done so now and then as part of a larger survival pattern. Whenever possible, I did avoid taking classes with teachers noted for their shallowness, ineptness, semiliteracy, ideological rigidity, or unfairness. The students were a fairly shrewd group after their freshman year. They could be divided roughly into two groups: those who took their work seriously, even solemnly—a majority, I think—and were determined to learn the subject matter respectably; and those who were working for high grades against a dubious future, who knew they simply wanted to teach high school or enter professional or graduate school and had to amass a good grade-point average as a form of wealth. Some were just marking time, of course.

I knew little about what I wanted in some distant future and was a mixture of the two. I dropped courses as soon as it was clear I had made a mistake of any sort, and early in my career I registered with one of the reputedly toughest professors in the department. I actually cared little about grades when I began work in English. The more serious of us shunned the men who lectured strictly from notes, were long on history

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and short on criticism, who could entertain no fresh or iconoclastic opinions, who mechanically dispensed wisdom available in standard texts, or who rambled on aimlessly and amiably about literature in the manner of *Saturday Review of Literature* feuilletons.

I stayed through one semester of a two-semester course with a teacher of whom I have no good memories. He had become even then a common academic hero whose status depended on an unspoken conspiracy between him and some of his students to apotheosize him—to everyone's aggrandizement. Not only does such a teacher thrust greatness on himself, with the help of his accomplices, but some of that greatness oozes over onto those squatting at his feet. This celebrated man was short and feisty, with the mannerisms of a rooster. He had a strut like James Cagney's, and his laugh was a cackle. He taught creative writing—short story the first semester, longer forms the second, if you survived—with a missionary zeal and a missionary's arrogance. His faith in his mission was strengthened by his having once been a barbarian himself, in these very halls. He had risen to his present eminence through the forcefulness of his own person. His brutal manner must have hidden a depth of defensiveness. He had had a difficult time with his doctorate, and an even more difficult one breaking through the barriers that held back CCNY graduates from joining the faculty, let alone from progressing upward to professorships. Yet I still cannot forgive his bludgeoning, callous manner toward captive, vulnerable, deferential students. He believed that being a published writer, of anything, was one of the few things worth living for; we either shared his near-fanatical conviction that published writing would bring glory in this world and was evidence of salvation itself, or we marked ourselves as doomed. He took emphatic and exclusive credit for every graduate of CCNY who was ever to gain a reputation of any kind as a writer anywhere.

Some years after the war, after I had got my doctorate at Columbia and joined the staff of *Commentary*, we met for lunch. By then several of my short stories had appeared in that magazine and elsewhere, as well as some of my reportage and criticism. "You know," he said to me, "Bernard Malamud only got a B in my course. You were one of the few A's I ever gave." That has never been a grade that pleased me much. Now and then I wonder whether my having learned to meet his expectations might not account for the very slight career I have had as a writer of short stories. I envy Malamud his B, which clearly reflected a firmer independence, in addition to greater talent.

I was excused from the first-year course in freshman English and was allowed to take advanced courses early. An upperclassman I knew recommended that I register for Professor Ralph Gordon's course in met-

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rics. Ralph Gordon, with his quiet, ruminative, allusive manner, was an extraordinary teacher. He took us into his confidence as he talked quietly, seemingly almost to himself, in carefully shaped lectures that dealt both with highly technical material—the delicate nerves, muscles, and vessels of poetry—and with the whole body of poetic vitality. He had sensibly codified, for purposes of undergraduate teaching, the incredible complexities of English prosody.

As we studied technical matters, we also submitted our own verses in some of the major forms. He wrote wry phrases of response to these exercises. He was impersonal, even remote in class, sometimes appearing to be simply meditating aloud, but we knew that he read our critical and creative exercises with exquisite care. He set down his lapidary words in a careful handwriting on our papers, using a fountain pen with a fine point. I came to feel that, in my weekly work and his comment on it, I had been engaged in an important conversation about serious things. He raised piquant questions, posed gentle challenges in those quiet, elliptical, reverberating comments. I got an A for the course; that is, I had satisfied his measure. That grade is the one I am proudest of in my undergraduate career.

For the next two years I settled into doing individual honors work with Gordon, mostly on the metrics and meanings of Hopkins and Eliot. (My master's essay at Columbia was an elaboration of a report on logaoedics I had done for him on Hopkins's sprung rhythm.) Our conferences were largely rambling, patient exchanges about literature, all forms and all periods. We said a few small things about ourselves. It awed me to be given the gift of private talk with Professor Gordon. I cherished it—listening mostly, savoring his lambent disquisitions.

I blame the atmosphere of CCNY, as perhaps I should not do, for my reserve, amounting almost to paralysis, in maintaining touch with him. Before I left my teaching job at CCNY to join *Commentary*, I learned that he had stood for chairman of the Department of English as the candidate of what was described as the "conservative" faction. By that time I had lost interest in the department, let alone passion, and I wondered helplessly what "conservative" could have meant in the context of that community. The faction that won the election was a coalition of decent enough persons joined with some of the worst types I have ever seen in the academy—self-serving, inhumane, shallow, arrogant. Gordon sent me a one-line letter when I resigned from City College, in which he said (to paraphrase him) that a man must learn to be like fine steel: endlessly resilient, never breaking.

A good number of our teachers, I am always touched to recall, were especially generous, warm, and concerned even when particulars about

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us puzzled or annoyed them. My first math professor, a man with the memorable name of Truly C. Hardy, was new at City College and spoke with a Mississippi accent. I recall him jeering one day about some chanting group that was marching into Lewisohn Stadium across the street from our classroom in Townsend Harris Hall. It was spring, and the noise came through the open windows. The course was Mathematical Analysis, required of all entering students, and obviously one of several such courses almost deliberately designed to screen out unprepared or unmotivated students from further college work. Dr. Hardy concentrated gently but with determination on the worst students in the class, who included one black. I remember how impressed, indeed chastened, I was to see this white southerner, indifferent if not hostile to political activism, being so unaffectedly, openly concerned to overcome the mathematical inadequacies of his students—black, Jewish, etcetera. It clearly meant much to him that we crack the difficulties of the course. When things suddenly fell into place for me, he happily encouraged me to go on with math and nearly persuaded me to major in the subject, an impulse I had to resist almost in panic whenever it seized me.

When a teacher or subject impressed me, I momentarily considered majoring in him or it. Milton Milhauser encouraged and strengthened an early commitment to English. Lewis Feuer taught philosophy, centering his approach on Marx and Russell, by allowing his classes to shape the daily discussions with only the slightest Socratic guidance; he was the first philosophical Marxist I ever knew who was also deeply anti-Stalinist. Isidor Chein got me so involved in psychology one summer session, providing a rich and intensive survey of the major schools, that it took me some years to divest myself of two delusions: first, that I had a firm grasp of psychological statistics as well as of Freudian theory and, second, that I was prepared to teach or practice in that field on the basis of one semester's study, however definitive.

The two Latin professors I had were John Bridge and George P. Quackenbos. I had a curious time with Bridge in my first semester on campus. Most of the students in the class were juniors and seniors completing their requirements for the B.A. degree. (The other two degrees offered by the College of Arts and Sciences—bachelor of social science and bachelor of science—did not require Latin.) They were hardened college students, not to say hardened Latin ones, and they all clearly relied heavily on "trots" (translations) for their daily stints. I had never heard of a trot, or "pony," before and through that whole semester could not make out why Bridge badgered everyone so much about etymology and syntax, to neither of which I had ever given all that much attention, since I had enough trouble piecing out an idiomatic translation on the

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basis of instinct. (When I began teaching freshman composition and studying Old English, I realized that my sense of syntax had come largely from that Latin course.) Quackenbos, who was an old-fashioned Victorian gentleman down to his high shoes, taught every class as though it had been programmed, including the little jokes and asides. He used to retreat a step or two when he told a joke. He once allowed me to make up a class I had missed, and I did so in his office. His records were slightly confused, so instead of querying me on the lesson I had missed, he repeated a class I had attended. He went through the same comments, the same little jokes, the same questions; and I fell under the spell and made the same little mistakes and got the same corrections.

Although I still regret not having taken more Latin and some Greek, it was sheer accident that I took any Latin at all. At an elementary school assembly for my class of graduating eighth-graders, a teacher in charge of athletics and recess had recommended that we consider taking Latin and French in high school. He was answering a question from one of the students and was clearly floundering. "That's a good combination, I understand," he said. I had no one to tell me otherwise. As for my majoring in English, that was because I had read a great deal since early childhood and had long wanted to be a writer. It gives me pause today to realize how accidentally, almost haphazardly, my life was determined by the decisions I seem to have made so ignorantly, so flippantly even, in high school and college.

What I continue to find difficult to grasp altogether is the liberal, eclectic breadth of my education at City College. It must have derived as much from the larger world of New York in the thirties as from the campus. My understanding of art I owe in good measure to the superb teacher I had for a survey course, a man named Eggers who taught us how to look at both ancient and modern works and how to relate what we saw to pleasure, understanding, and evaluation. But even here, as I think about it, I may already have gone some little way in art on my own, through regular visits to the Metropolitan and to the Museum of Modern Art (when the latter was still housed in a series of brownstones on West 53rd Street). I early began to read Clement Greenberg in *Partisan Review*. In New York at that time, in the circles in which I found myself, it seemed as inevitable to do these things as to go to the Lewisohn Stadium to hear the New York Philharmonic summer concerts for a quarter. At City College the stentorian-voiced professor of music shouted out his lectures in the Great Hall, that enormous baronial cavern which served as our classroom. His telling us we were to learn how many symphonies Beethoven wrote and to recognize the major melody of Tchaikovsky's "*Pathetic*" (giving it the American pronunciation) *Sym-*

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phony certainly did not turn me against music. It seemed as proper to respond to the possibilities of art and music, to psychology, physics, mathematics, and political science as to all aspects of English, including philology and versification. We felt compelled to become, or at least appear to be, Renaissance men. Indeed, I believed that one couldn't seriously study literature without an awareness of aesthetics (pleasure) at one end of the gamut of motivation and of society (responsibility) at the other. I still feel strongly that students do best in an academic environment where the study of literature is associated with that of the sciences, social and physical, rather than isolated with the arts and humanities.

Both my home and the world outside affected me in large and general ways. My mother had somewhere, in the course of emigrating from Russia and working in the shirtwaist factories in this country around 1915, picked up tag lines emphasizing the glory of *la vie de bohème.* She liked to drop the names of Tolstoy and Chekhov, sometimes giving me the impression she had known them; she took books in Russian out of the library. From my father, who was a workingman from the age of ten in Kiev, I got my sense of politics, among other ways in such primitive imperatives as the absolute injunction never to cross a picket line. Sometime in the twenties, when the Socialist Ramsay MacDonald became prime minister of England, my father had me memorize the ode written for the occasion by John Masefield, then poet laureate. I got up on a chair at parties and recited the sturdily Kiplingesque lines.

But I think the Depression, which hung over the country throughout the thirties, determined my education more than any other single force. I grew up with the conviction that the only jobs you could ever get were irrelevant to what you really wanted to do. You might prepare for the law or the civil service, but on your own you read and wrote poetry or fiction, or painted, or danced. Jobs or careers were considered necessary but irrelevant supports of one's true calling, which was always art or learning.

Classmates planned prelaw studies with a certain hopelessness. They worried about grades, not about learning. Other friends planned to go into "practical" careers; social work and accountancy were big at the time. Most of us took courses in education, in the event that teaching in high school might become realistically possible for us. I remember no one who was premed or predental among my immediate associates; aside from posing the nearly insuperable obstacle of expense, medical schools in the United States were still exercising a quota system against Jews. We all shared the fear of war, and some of us were fearful even of forms of domestic revolution; New York policemen seemed a shadowy, alien

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force, and the Deep South was thought of dimly as being in a state of occupation by sheriffs and lynch mobs. Yet we somehow welcomed a chance to do something physical against fascism. Young men I knew were going off to fight in Spain, and one neighborhood boy died there. Not too many years later, some left to join the guerrilla enterprises in Israel. And then for all of us began the period of waiting to join the war against the Nazis and the Japanese. It seemed to me the height of pointlessness in those years—first the Depression, then the wars—to be vocationally practical about college courses. Education seemed to be particularly impractical and, ideally, was never to be confused with any type of vocational training. Learning came about when full curiosity could follow its powerful impulse and pursue slow, deep pleasures. Once on the subway, when I was bringing back to the college library a friend's copies of Durkheim's *Le Suicide* and Menninger's *Man Against Himself*, I started reading them casually, became absorbed, then took them out in my name to read them thoroughly. So, desultorily, did one's education proceed. My years as a student at City College seemed to offer me a rare chance to learn languages, read remote literatures, sense other times, other qualities of life, ruminate about other value systems, discover the range of experience.

Not least, I became profoundly certain during this time that although making money was not vulgar in and of itself, making money while doing something you didn't want to do *was* vulgar, even obscene. Making money only to make money, not as a means to support doing something else, was unspeakably offensive. I have flirted with business in a halfhearted way a number of times. What depressed me very soon, and kept me from going on, was the discontinuity between what had to be done to make the money and what one might want to do with the money later, when one was not making money. Just enjoying the making or spending of money, or the talking about it, turned me on very little—although I was then, and still am, respectfully impressed and subdued by the unsentimental, hard-nosed pragmatism of truly successful moneymakers.

It must have been around my junior year that I began to hope I might, on the basis of my college education, use reading, writing, thinking, and talking—the processes of learning—in some direct way to support myself in this world in these times. I count myself singularly fortunate in working out some degree of harmony between what I wanted to do and what I had to do. Those undergraduate years at CCNY established the basis for my way of life.

In short, I am grateful for the solid education I got while at City College, on and off campus, but I have never been sure to whom exactly I

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owe this gratitude. Certainly my fellow students would come first in my list of creditors; but students, I have recognized in my years as a teacher and administrator, need direction and challenge, and above all the respect of their teachers, to give themselves over seriously to serious study. We got a measure of these, of course, sometimes in perverse ways. The faculty and the students I remember with admiration and gratitude were those who themselves were often marginal to the system—untenured, on the way to more hospitable places like Columbia, Harvard, Yale, Chicago, Berkeley, Virginia, Cornell, NYU. Morris Raphael Cohen has movingly described his sense of being on the sidelines all his years at CCNY. He had already gone on to other schools by the time I went there. He came back for a series of guest lectures during my first semester, but the tradition of his tart give-and-take with students was muted. The questions and answers were low-keyed and subdued. Alfred Kazin passed through so briefly that I had no chance to take a course with him, although I sat in on one or two of his classes. It would be possible to make up one of the most distinguished faculties in the world by simply gathering together all those persons who passed through City College and didn't stay on or who, for one reason or another, never made it to the campus. Bertrand Russell was denied an appointment my first year at CCNY, and during my time there a conclave of the Department of English decided not to offer T. S. Eliot a visiting professorship on the ground that he did not have an earned doctorate—a bad precedent.

Any college leaves its graduates with both a substance and a style. Substantively CCNY alumni can hold their own with any other body of alumni; they can certainly claim their fair share of achievement in the sciences, the professions, the universities, in all the public and private sectors of our total national life. The style, however, is unique.

Those years in the crucible of CCNY—with hostile, challenging, indifferent instructors, contemptuous administrators, contending ideologies—helped mix an instinctive defensiveness with a naturally balancing aggressiveness. Very early, students learned not to acknowledge their ignorance casually, not to concede points lightly, rarely to assume that their teachers might sometimes be privy to wisdom. We could not confidently or gracefully conclude that we were sometimes either simply ignorant or simply wrong. The important end too often became not so much to know something but at least to appear to know something, if only as a holding device. We learned, almost as a reflex, to contend. Privately we may have known most of the time how much we didn't know, but there was no reason to let the enemy know this too; we could always catch up, fill in the gaps on our own, offstage. Our discourse became too

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easily a form of debate in which we had to score points at whatever expense.

The competitiveness of New York intellectual life is still exceedingly intense; at the colleges then it was fierce. At one end of the spectrum, Columbia undergraduate types, conditioned to confidence, arrogantly dismissed naivety or slowness of mind or were courteously silent with their lessers; at the other, NYU representatives were often plainly and anxiously defensive. City College persons (and their counterparts at Brooklyn College and Hunter) awkwardly and in an uncertain manner combined their impatience in intellectual discourse with the deference that comes from insecurity.

It is easy to sentimentalize an unhappy past. Nostalgia is good-willed, forgiving. CCNY, perhaps as much as the pogrom-ridden, poverty-oppressed *shtetlach* of east Europe, deserves at some point a sober report, a fair assessment, not only the temptingly bittersweet rendering of a *Fiddler on the Roof*, which delights while it distorts and dims. Possibly a New York City public college could have worked in no other way for those students in that place and at that time. After all, it's long over and things did not turn out so badly. But I must occasionally remind myself, with all the necessary pain, that it was no picnic either.

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Gallery, Lackawanna, N.Y.

GARY ZEBRUN

Inside his apartment
he's lived again the lives
of his family,
of his unintelligible kin,
whose faces matted
behind cheap glass
look almost blessed
in the strange half-life
of pictures.

Grandfather,
whose wooden leg,
carved good, a son said,
from Russian birch,
stands heroically
atop the television.
He built a lumber mill
in a foreign country,
as those sacked back home
in Novgorod, before he sailed
for Canada and heartache.
Who'd guess,
one night those trees
would burst and squall
like black snow,
the fortune, wrecked?

Above the old one, son and wife
are monuments of love;
caught timidly
in this black and white,
they knew of death. That one

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drank too much, a politician
whose land he sold
for dust and booze.
And she, a mother,
her nervous disease
much worse, then all the
twitching stopped. Andy
was her favorite boy,
in 1944, the handsomest sailor
this steel town ever saw.
Afterwards, fifteen years
locked up in his fever,
in and out the Veterans'
psychiatric wing. (I think
he loved his baby brother much.)
I'm there beside my own brother,
beside his wife and kids,
who wear the tidy clothes
of the stylish seventies.
And before us all,
like some worshipper,
a father sits, divorced,
far into decline.

Outside, the fires
from Bethlehem burn,
black smoke rising,
like the choked breath
of generations,
this human turning,
irretrievable.

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Reading Faust

JUDAH GOLDIN

Robin, I've been reading Faust
in the copy you left behind,
one side German and the other
English, to trot back and forth with.
I can't tell how far you read in it,
though dog-eared pages hint
where you halted till the next bend;
but once you located a passage
I asked for, and copied it in your printscript
(the letters like midgets on parade:
how we laughed as we sillied together)
tidily on a loose leaf of memo pad
for my purpose (what was it, what purpose?)
I now use as bookmark and warning—
7/24 you wrote, not the year,
that was self-evident, as the present
always is to the unsuspecting—
denn eben wo Begriffe fehlen,
da stellt ein Wort zur rechten Zeit sich ein.
Whenever my memory of you fades
and I strain to remember your face,
the eyes abandoning hope,
the lips disdainful of coloring,
I recall these Mephistopheles lines.

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Postmortem on a Rebirth

The Catholic Intellectual Renaissance

JAMES HITCHCOCK

IN THE SUMMER OF 1907, POPE PIUS X, later to be canonized a saint, issued two documents, *Lamentabili Sane Exitu* ("With Truly Lamentable Effect") and *Pascendi Dominici Gregis* ("Feeding the Lord's Flock"), both in condemnation of a theological movement which he called Modernism. Among the doctrines condemned were denials of the historical reliability of Scripture and the Church's authority to interpret it, and denials of immutable truth. The drift of Modernism, as the pope condemned it, was that religion was an essentially human phenomenon, the product of the evolving creative consciousness of the human race.

Whether all the Modernists held to all the positions condemned has been a matter of debate ever since. It is a judgment which is difficult to make because to some extent the Modernists were either supported or condemned for wishing to introduce more historical studies into theology, and it is not clear how far all of them wished to carry the historical method. The principal targets of the condemnation (which, like most such papal documents, did not single out individuals) were undoubtedly the French priest Alfred Loisy and the Irish former Jesuit George Tyrrell. The most eminent names associated with the movement were those of laymen—Baron Friedrich von Hügel and Maurice Blondel. Both of the latter were sharply critical of some aspects of the Modernists' work, and the degree to which they should be considered Modernists has also been the source of continuing controversy.

Conventional wisdom in Catholic intellectual circles of the 1970s holds that the condemnation of Modernism brought an end to serious Catholic thought for more than fifty years, ushering in a reign of terror which inhibited intellectuals until the benign pontificate of Pope John XXIII (1958–63) and the dramatic changes of the Second Vatican Council (1962–65).

Oddly, however, an obscure event the year before the Modernist condemnation had already signaled the beginning of possibly the brightest period of modern Catholic thought. In June 1906, in Montmartre, the

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young Jacques and Raïssa Maritain, both former agnostics—he from a liberal Protestant background, she of Russian-Jewish birth—received baptism. To the degree that they were aware of Modernism at all (they may not have become aware of it until some time later), they approved Pius X's condemnation.

The Maritain conversion can be looked at from one standpoint as another in a series of such occurrences stretching back to the time of Romanticism, a process involving the conscious rejection of the rational skepticism of the Enlightenment. John Henry Newman was the chief nineteenth-century figure in the drama. From another standpoint, however, the twentieth-century conversion phenomenon, lasting practically down to 1960, was a distinct phase which owed relatively little to the earlier ones.

Perhaps the most remarkable thing about Catholic thought in the twentieth century has been precisely the fact that most of its eminent figures were converts. That men suckled in a creed outworn should grow up prepared to elaborate and defend it is not surprising. That brilliant skeptics should ultimately be attracted to it is surprising. Ironically, even in France, the "eldest daughter of the Church," most of the great twentieth-century Catholic intellectuals—the Maritains, Etienne Gilson, Paul Claudel, Léon Bloy, Charles Péguy, Gabriel Marcel, Edith Stein—were converts, either actually or in the sense of born Catholics who rejected childhood faith but later returned to the Church with a passion. There were also the near-converts, like Henri Bergson and Simone Weil.

England, where the Catholic population, other than poor Irish, was quite small, naturally needed convert thinkers even more, and a supply was always available: G. K. Chesterton, Christopher Dawson, Ronald Knox, Graham Greene, and Evelyn Waugh. Even Anglo-Catholicism gained its principal luminaries—T. S. Eliot, W. H. Auden, C. S. Lewis—from convert ranks.

Modernism, treated for over fifty years like a minor and altogether uninteresting event, now returns to haunt Catholicism like a repressed desire, and it has become customary to say that the questions which the Modernists raised now constitute the present Catholic intellectual agenda. Also customary is the lament that condemnation of the movement cut off the Church's most promising effort to make its doctrines credible to modern skeptics. Yet the remarkable fact is that the distinguished converts of the twentieth century were attracted to the Church, not in spite of the condemnation, but almost, in some cases, because of it. What they found attractive and credible in it were precisely those things which Pius X sought to protect with his condemnation, and they found the characteristic doctrines of Modernism either false or uninteresting.

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A little-noticed aspect of modern intellectual history is that although liberal religion, whether Christian or Jewish, was created with the aim of making the old faith credible to modern doubters, it rarely does so. Such liberalizations, rather, appeal primarily to those who were raised in the old creed, have become restive under it, and are often in the process of abandoning it. Intellectual converts are almost always attracted to rather traditional and even rigorous versions of religion, probably because liberalized religion merely confirms the skeptic's suspicion that the traditional faith was false.

For whatever reason, France and England were the centers of this Catholic intellectual revival, quite possibly because of the necessary confrontation with a hostile culture which was a permanent feature of Catholic life in those countries. (France, while nominally Catholic, harbors a continuing tradition of anti-religious skepticism dating from the eighteenth century.) The flowerings in Spain and Italy were much less brilliant and, while there was much activity in America, most of it was dependent on European models. The Church in Germany had a brilliant intellectual life, but Catholic energies there were focused primarily on questions of internal Catholic concern and made less contact with the wider culture, at least outside the German-speaking lands (the chief exceptions being Romano Guardini, Josef Pieper, and the Swiss theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar).

Catholicism inspired an especially fruitful literary creativity, including not only Waugh, Greene, Georges Bernanos, and François Mauriac but even a major Catholic novelist in a most unlikely place, Norway's Sigrid Undset. Perhaps only in literature was the American contribution, while modest, nonetheless significant, embracing a generation of writers—Flannery O'Connor, J. F. Powers, Walker Percy—younger than the European masters and essentially independent of them. (Catholic writers roughly contemporaneous with the Europeans, like F. Scott Fitzgerald and James T. Farrell, found largely negative inspiration in their childhood faith.) America has also had its noted literary converts—Robert Lowell, Thomas Merton, and Tennessee Williams—although Catholicism's influence on Williams's writing is scarcely detectable.

That Catholicism should have proved fruitful in the twentieth-century literary context is not surprising for several reasons; not the least important is the fundamental dramatic tensions which it generates: sin and redemption, authority and freedom, tradition and experience. Modern culture, as it grows simultaneously more open and more uniform, takes on a certain flatness which renders novelistic creation in particular quite problematical. For those who took Catholicism seriously, however, there was never any lack of enticing possibilities.

An important measure of Catholicism's spiritual and intellectual col-

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lapse since 1960 is that whatever literary inspiration it now provides is once again a largely negative one (for example, the Americans Tom McHale and Mary Gordon and the Australians Thomas Kenneally and Colleen McCullough), sometimes verging on hate. The classic Catholic novelists of the "pre-conciliar period"—that is, the period of the "unreformed" Church before the Second Vatican Council—found a resolution of tensions in ways which reaffirmed the essential validity of belief. The sufferings endured and the perplexities explored finally yielded an experience of richness and profundity previously only glimpsed. Nowhere, perhaps, did Catholic novelists move more resolutely against the cultural grain than in their willingness to propose the redemptive value of renunciation. Oddly, despite the rich comic possibilities inherent in Catholicism's relationship to modern culture, only Evelyn Waugh, among the major Catholic writers of the classical period (ca. 1930–60), systematically exploited them. He was also the most rigorously orthodox of all and the least accepting of modern secularity.

A major unsolved mystery is why Christianity, and especially Catholicism, has never ceased to inspire composers all the way down to the present, while overtly religious painting, among major artists, virtually ceased in the seventeenth century. In the twentieth century alone, the list of composers who took inspiration from Catholic liturgy includes Bruckner, Stravinsky, Poulenc, Dupré, Duruflé, and Messiaen, alongside Anglicans like Vaughan Williams and Britten. Among painters, however, Georges Rouault stands almost alone as an identifiably Catholic artist.

A Catholic presence in the arts could perhaps have been predicted in the century of science; at least since the time of Pascal the ground of religious affirmation in the West has been shifting from the objective to the subjective, from formal argumentation to the seemingly ineradicable religious sense which is found in human beings. In the world of imagination, virtually no belief seems impossible, and religious themes have often been used by artists having no belief in the doctrines behind them. (Among major writers of the Catholic revival perhaps only Graham Greene is open to this suspicion, although, as he describes his development, he moved only gradually away from the orthodoxy which he had embraced at the time of his conversion in the 1920s.)

In its most powerful and influential expressions, however, the Catholic revival sought to meet the rationalists on their own ground. While not insensitive to the artistic and the intuitive (both Maritain and Gilson wrote aesthetic treatises), the dominant Catholic thinkers of the age were determined that the phenomenon of belief should be placed on a rigorously constructed foundation. It was Scholastic philosophy and theology which would receive the major investment of Catholic intellectual resources.

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Despite general impressions to the contrary, the authority of Thomas Aquinas did not dominate Catholic thought through all the centuries following his death. Although his name was revered in the nineteenth century, other thinkers, notably the sixteenth-century Jesuit Francisco Suárez, were probably more influential. The modern Thomistic revival dates essentially from the authoritative exhortations of Pope Leo XIII in the 1880s.

Any number of modern people, beginning with Machiavelli, have asserted that Christianity is useful, and the Romantics managed to restore its respectability by proclaiming its beauty. But to the converts of the early twentieth century one question alone mattered: was it true? The conversion of the Maritains stemmed from their conviction that it was. Their dilemma was the age-old metaphysical one—whether life has meaning—and faith was the only alternative to the fulfillment of a suicide pact they had made with one another. In the skeptical and positivistic atmosphere of the Sorbonne of 1900, religious beliefs alone seemed hopeful and truly humane.

Initially the Maritains may have been what the Church calls "fideists," a position which is widespread even though officially condemned. It means religious belief which is self-validating, an understanding of belief which is essentially nonrational and even irrational, without philosophical foundation. Groping for something more, the Maritains passed under the influence of Bergson. But it was the discovery of Aquinas that proved to be a revelation almost as great as that of Catholicism itself. "Woe unto me if I should fail to Thomisticize," Jacques Maritain quipped in a paraphrase of Saint Paul. Gilson came to Thomism, and returned to faith, via a much cooler and somewhat later route. He discovered the medieval philosophical heritage while researching Descartes's intellectual antecedents.

The Scholastic revival predated Maritain and Gilson, but without them it would probably have remained a wholly Catholic thing. Instead, by the eve of World War II, a kind of Scholasticism was being taught even in some secular colleges, among them the University of Chicago under Mortimer Adler and Richard McKeon, where the joke ran that atheist professors taught Catholic philosophy to Jewish students. Even where it did not command assent, Scholasticism was taken seriously. Gilson, for example, gave his series of lectures on *Medieval Universalism and Its Present Value* in conjunction with the Harvard tercentenary of 1936, and in 1943 lectured at Rutgers on *Dogmatism and Tolerance.* His *The Unity of Philosophical Experience* was also based on Harvard lectures, and *Reason and Revelation in the Middle Ages* were lectures given at the University of Virginia. Maritain was welcome at a number of American universities, notably Princeton. Suggestive of a not altogether positive kind of

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change which has occurred in American academic circles over the past few decades is the fact that such lectures on such subjects would not be likely to gain sponsorship today and, if they did, would probably attract little interest.

Against the positivistic and skeptical spirit of the dominant American philosophies, the apostles of Neo-Scholasticism asserted the possibility of genuine metaphysical knowledge, a perennial truth valid and knowable in all historical periods. Toward this end, they proposed Aristotelian logic and epistemology as constitutive of the method, and their ultimate conclusions were also essentially Aristotelian, albeit in Thomistic form. It was a system of thought which began with sense experience, proceeded to a metaphysical understanding of what was experienced, and reasoned through a series of causes to the Final Cause, God.

The openness which many nonbelievers showed toward Neo-Scholasticism may have owed something to the religious revival among Western intellectuals that began as early as T. S. Eliot's conversion in 1928 and came to flower after World War II. However, the Neo-Scholastics were emphatically not calling for a revival of faith, or at least not primarily. They took their stand on the foundation of reason, and their critique of modern thought—put forth most boldly in Maritain's *Three Reformers* and Gilson's *The Unity of Philosophical Experience*—was that it either rejected reason or misused it. All forms of irrationalism, whether fideistic, Romantic, psychological, or existential, were criticized, as were uses of reason that were merely instrumental or analytic and failed to grasp reality in all its fullness.

At the same time, the Neo-Scholastics also insisted that a genuine rationality would inevitably lead to God, understood first as the ultimate cause of all things. Reason, while it did not inevitably lead to faith, nonetheless showed that faith was not irrational. The act of believing was itself not unnatural, a recognition finally that reason had been pushed to its limits and that there were more things in the universe than could be dreamed of in philosophy.

The fideistic tradition in Christianity, which also had a long pedigree, was sternly read out of court, and much of Catholic intellectual life came to be characterized by a kind of hyper-rationalism in which the passion for logical proof and argumentation was dominant. This led to a strange and ultimately very damaging anomaly in Catholic higher education, whereby theology was often not taught at all or was taught badly, while major effort was concentrated on the teaching of philosophy. In this respect Gilson was far less rigid than some of the lesser Neo-Scholastics, and he aroused controversy by his insistence that, in Aquinas, philosophy and theology were not distinct disciplines; that Aquinas's philosophical positions had been directly influenced by his religious faith (for

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example, his assertion of God as "pure being" having been inspired by God's self-revelation to Moses in the burning bush: "I am Who am"). Maritain, while of deep faith, was more inclined to operate within a strictly philosophical framework. (A probably apocryphal story has Raïssa Maritain asking a woman, "Are you a Thomist?" "No, but I'm a Catholic." "Well, at least that's a start.")

The Neo-Scholastics were naturally vulnerable to the charge of being Romantic nostalgists, of being religiously motivated to return to the Middle Ages. Whatever elements of truth there may have been in that charge, it seems likely that they were attracted less by the idea of a perfect age of faith than by a rationally based philosophy which was more comprehensive than anything modernity could offer—reason not primarily as skeptical and analytical but as creative and systematic. Gilson in particular was anti-Romantic in his repeated insistence that many self-proclaimed Thomists really misunderstood the nature of Scholasticism and read it in ways that were subtly corrupted by precisely those modern philosophical errors which they were ostensibly rejecting. (The key point for both Maritain and Gilson was the apprehension of the "act of existence" itself—the question whether or not a thing really exists, and how, not merely the general or abstract conception of it in the mind.)

Gilson was a historian who ventured only occasionally into fields of contemporary controversy. His historical work was monumental: a series of studies of Augustine, Bernard of Clairvaux, Héloise and Abelard, Aquinas, Bonaventure, Duns Scotus, and Dante, culminating in the magisterial *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages.* Rarely has one man dominated a scholarly field as long as Gilson did from the Medieval Institute at the University of Toronto.

The Neo-Scholastics made a bold and unfashionable but certainly not unreasonable claim: that the process of human thought culminates at certain points in history, arriving at a peak whose achievements are forever valid. Their peak was the thirteenth century and the work of Aquinas, whose synthesis of faith and reason was to be taken as the most profound intellectual account of the depth and complexity of existence. The history of late Scholasticism, loosely lumped together under the title of Nominalism, was then the history of the disintegration of that synthesis, the prelude to and cause of the modern Western cultural breakdown. (When the scholarly reaction to Gilson set in, it centered primarily on two things—a more positive evaluation of late Scholasticism and the charge that Gilson underestimated the influence of Plato on the whole Scholastic enterprise.)

Gilson did occasionally venture into battles of the moment. In *Dogmatism and Tolerance,* for example, he made a case similar to one made by Hannah Arendt—that totalitarianism does not aim to instill, but to

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destroy, convictions in people—and went on to argue that certain kinds of dogmatically held beliefs would be a bulwark against the modern totalitarian state. (Earlier, in one of his Harvard lectures, he had joked that the spirit of relativism could hardly become more tolerant than to welcome the dogmatist into its midst, a congratulatory remark which would have much less applicability in contemporary academia.)

However, it was primarily Maritain who undertook to demonstrate the relevance of Thomism to the twentieth century, publishing five books on aesthetics and five on politics, as well as formal philosophical works and other assorted projects. For some years he lived in Princeton and for a time served as French ambassador to the Vatican. In the 1920s he had given his support (as had T. S. Eliot) to Action Française, the French movement which, under the atheist Charles Maurras, advocated a revival of the prerevolutionary alliance of throne and altar. But Maritain became disillusioned with the movement even before it was condemned by Pope Pius XI in 1926. By World War II, Maritain had become a convinced democrat and, living in the United States during the Pétain regime, found himself increasingly attracted to the American political system. Unlike in France, democracy in the New World was not contaminated by anticlericalism and official secularist ideology. He thought that separation of church and state had obviated church-state conflict.

In *Scholasticism and Politics*, written during World War II, Maritain expressed discouragement at the pessimism and lack of self-confidence characteristic of the Western democracies, and in the postwar world he joined enthusiastically in the resurgence of that confidence. While stopping short of asserting that democracy as a political system flowed directly from correct philosophical principles, he nonetheless dismissed Fascism and Communism as inherently irrational. Bourgeois individualism was, however, implicitly immoral and, by breaking down all sense of community and shared moral values, would inevitably end in some form of statism: order imposed from above. In *Integral Humanism* (1936) and later works, he developed a systematic critique of the prevailing modern political ideologies and argued that a workable political order, which might appropriately be democracy, depended on a correct understanding of human nature and of natural moral law.

Maritain became something of an Americanophile, seeking to counter not only what he regarded as European misconceptions about America but also the Americans' own self-deprecation. In *Reflections on America* (1958), he argued that Americans were not really materialistic but were the most idealistic people in the world, although theirs was an idealism often unformed and lacking in philosophical bases. America, he thought, offered perhaps the best contemporary prospect for the emer-

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gence of a truly Christian civilization, based not on governmental decree but on the gradual realization of Christian values on the part of a majority of the population. American saints were coming, he predicted.

But his postulation of a possible Christian civilization in America did not in any way temper his optimistic political liberalism—a facet of his thought which caused him to be held in suspicion by some of his fellow Catholics in the 1950s. The Dominican chaplain at Princeton, for example, refused to allow him to address the Catholic students. (One of the exquisite ironies of recent Catholic history was that Maritain in his last books was acerbically critical of secularizing priests, while the Dominican chaplain resigned from the priesthood and ended his days as a real estate salesman in Florida.)

No doubt in part because of Raïssa's background, Maritain had an enduring interest in anti-Semitism, which he analyzed and criticized in two books, and he was one of the principal influences in the effort to establish better Jewish-Catholic relations. Racism he regarded as America's most severe flaw. As early as 1958 he was praising Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Chicago neighborhood organizer Saul Alinsky.

Maritain and, to a lesser extent, Gilson provided the program for a bold kind of Catholic intellectuality—an appropriation of medieval thought for modern use, not so much a medieval revival as a demonstration of the perennial relevance of the medieval philosophical achievement. The modern mind was to be brought back to its Catholic roots, not by the simple disparagement of modernity or by emphasis on the subjective necessity of faith, but by a rigorous and demanding appeal to reason. In the process, Scholastic principles would be applied in new and often daring ways.

In the end the gamble failed. Despite promising signs in the 1940s, secular thinkers did not finally find the Scholastic appeal persuasive. And, as is inevitable when an intellectual community is dominated so thoroughly by a single system of thought, a restiveness was building up in Catholic circles. Although Maritain insisted that Thomism, because of the central importance it gave to the act of existence, was the true existentialism, Catholic intellectuals of the 1950s were attracted to the movement which more usually went by that name; and Gabriel Marcel, a Catholic existentialist of the same generation as Gilson and Maritain, was available to mediate between faith and anguish. Catholic colleges in America were hospitable to existentialist and phenomenological currents at a time when few secular institutions were, and what Catholics sought there was primarily a philosophy which was serious about the metaphysical questions of existence, yet not as rationalistic, rigid, and abstract as Scholasticism often seemed to be.

The Neo-Scholastics were often accused of not taking history seri-

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ously—a charge which could not but have a good deal of truth to it, given the fact that medieval philosophy had not recognized history as a properly scientific discipline and given the relentless Scholastic urge to discern fixed principles amidst the flux of change.

Although Catholic historians were numerous enough even in Neo-Scholasticism's heyday, only one major Catholic thinker approached the understanding of his religion from a primarily historical standpoint. Christopher Dawson was, like so many others, a convert. Raised in an apparently serene Anglicanism and entering the Church of Rome while in his twenties, he seems not to have passed through the crucible of doubt. A prolific writer despite a rather late start, he achieved a certain celebrity in both Catholic and non-Catholic circles, and his work in cultural history was praised by, among others, Arnold Toynbee, Harry Elmer Barnes, Crane Brinton, and George Lichtheim.

It was customary for Neo-Scholastics to speak rather patronizingly of Dawson's work, since he was doing mere history, where generalizations were of a lower order of significance than those supplied by metaphysics. Although Dawson was read and listened to, conventional opinion both inside and outside the Church had agreed to treat Neo-Scholasticism as the single most authentic expression of Catholic thought, and Dawson was thus regarded somewhat as an interesting anomaly. Whereas Gilson and Maritain were published almost exclusively by prestigious secular publishers, most of Dawson's books were brought out by the Catholic house of Sheed and Ward. In 1958 he was the first appointee to the new chair of Roman Catholic Studies at Harvard, but by that time he was in ill health and his influence was rather limited.

While religious faith as such was more overtly present in his work than in Maritain's, Dawson too asked to be judged primarily on scholarly grounds. His central thesis, elaborated with great sophistication and detail through numerous books, was that historically human cultures have always rested on some religious foundation and that the modern West is unique in the history of the world in attempting to dispense with that foundation. As a general thesis it seems close to being indisputable and, if it has not been taken sufficiently seriously by historians, this is probably because of their own discomfort in the presence of religious phenomena.

Yet Dawson did not claim to be only a historian and, although his learning was immense, he rarely engaged in the kind of original research which is the basic stuff of modern historiography. In compensation he demonstrated a formidable grasp of the most diverse cultural phenomena—art, theology, politics, economics, sociology—from practically all of the world's cultures. Long before it had become fashionable in academia to decry narrow disciplinary specialization and Western cultural

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provincialism, Dawson was showing precisely how a historian could, and indeed had to, account for all available data.

Nonbelievers could not accept Dawson's work, perhaps less because of his assertion of religion's historical importance—a contention that could hardly be denied—than because of his analysis of the likely future consequences of nonbelief. The loss of spiritual roots, he argued, would induce not only moral crises but political and cultural crises as well. Like Maritain, but more systematically and with much greater historical awareness, he predicted that modern bourgeois liberalism, left purely to its own devices, would drift toward some kind of totalitarianism, or else would prove incapable of withstanding totalitarianism's appeal. As early as the 1950s Dawson argued that the end of colonialism would not lead to the revival of native Asian and African cultures but to the beginnings of worldwide political uniformity based on the Western Marxist ideology.

Dawson's characteristic differences from the Neo-Scholastics were revealed in his treatment of the Protestant Reformation, which he, unlike Maritain, did not see primarily as the breakdown of the theological synthesis and the triumph of an irrational subjectivity; rather, he saw it as the triumph of a new worldliness made possible by the abolition of monasticism. Although he revered the Middle Ages, Dawson was more attracted to the culture of the baroque, the almost miraculous survival of deep and creative religious faith into the modern secular milieu. Both the Protestant north, with its austere religion of individual and interior faith, and a Catholic France, which had resisted the Counter-Reformation, were the seedbeds of modern secularity through their detaching of reason from both faith and imagination and liberating it for purely instrumental purposes.

Whereas Dawson for the most part stayed aloof from contemporary political controversies, he was the kind of conservative whose principles could have radical implications. He was coolly critical of both capitalism and nationalism, for example, seeing them as products of the modern secular bourgeois state, and nationalism in particular as a substitute religion. He advanced these judgments at a time when American Catholics tended to be ardent patriots and when free-enterprise capitalism enjoyed a generally good Catholic press.

If Maritain was politically liberal, professing his fundamental faith in Western democracy while urging a deepening of the moral and philosophical basis of that democracy, Dawson's critique of the political order went a good deal deeper. (Given the religious assumptions of both men, it could also be argued that Dawson was the more clear-eyed and consistent.) Opposed to Fascism and Communism as corruptions of the religious sense, he was cool toward democracy as based on illusions and as ultimately unable to withstand totalitarianism. Although his criticisms

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were muted (Dawson was rarely polemical in any overt way), there was a sense of his strong reservations about the American experiment.

His was not a sentimental medievalism, nor even a sentimental evocation of the baroque, but rather a vision of a social order based on explicit moral and religious values deeply embedded in the mental habits of the population and in social institutions. Reared in a quiet rural environment near the border of Wales and Herefordshire, he regretted the passing of the genuinely traditional and closely knit communities of his youth. He did not, however, propose a revival of older values, recognizing the impossibility of all such revivals. Rather, like Maritain and Gilson, he proposed the appropriation of certain older values for the purpose of creating a new social order, one which he recognized might look quite different from anything in the past.

If Dawson was held in suspicion in secular circles because of his overt Christianity, he was also held in suspicion by some Catholics because of his refusal to make Neo-Scholasticism, or indeed any philosophy, the center of the Catholic intellectual enterprise. Most Neo-Scholastics may have accepted his historical analysis, yet there was a prevalent feeling that, by basing the Christian case on history, he was weakening it. In *The Crisis of Western Education* (1961), he advocated a reinvigoration of the classical liberal arts tradition, but broadened and deepened by the inclusion both of modern and of non-Western components. Its purpose, he argued, was to put students in touch with the mainsprings of their own civilization, which alone could stem the Western cultural drift. His system stopped short of seeking to inculcate religious belief, although that might well have been one of its by-products. Instead, it aimed to make students appreciate and understand the religious roots of the modern West, and he thought that the Catholic colleges were heirs to a much deeper and richer culture than the secular schools had access to.

Dawson's proposals for educational reform were tried in a few small Catholic colleges but had only slight influence on the major institutions, where Neo-Scholasticism was the heart and soul of the curriculum. In private correspondence during the 1950s Dawson expressed serious doubts about this situation, offering the judgment that philosophy and theology were suitable subjects only for those who were already educated, and suggesting that the medieval universities had ultimately been killed by the dominance of Scholasticism. He considered Maritain a Romantic and complained that he approached literary works in an ahistorical way.

When Dawson made these judgments, in 1955, Neo-Scholasticism appeared to be impregnably self-confident and dominant in Catholic higher education, its attitude toward its critics either haughtily condemnatory or condescendingly tolerant. Many things came together in

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the next decade to shake that confidence, the most important being a religious event—the Second Vatican Council and what surrounded it. The Council attempted to define a new Catholic relationship to the world, and its pronouncements were also used by some people in much more radical ways than were ever intended.

The initial result was, for the first time, to give respectability to modes of philosophical inquiry other than the Scholastic. Like most forms of pluralism, this was not limited to peaceful coexistence. By 1965 the dominance of Scholasticism was severely shaken; it found itself retreating from movements which had the advantages of appearing youthful, progressive, and outside the establishment. By 1975, despite occasional flurries of renewed interest, Scholasticism had come close to disappearing in most Catholic colleges and universities, and virtually nowhere had it survived as a systematic, methodical quest for truth at the heart of the curriculum.

There are many reasons for this. Among the most important is the fact that the Scholastic mode of thinking is probably suitable only for relatively few people; it is a highly technical, subtle discipline, not easily grasped or assimilated. Generations of Catholics, including priests, learned it almost by rote, often ending with a set of abstract propositions which they could not easily relate to the world or to history. Dawson's pedagogy had proposed instead that Catholics (and others too) be drawn imaginatively back into the Christian past. Then, when they had made that past a part of themselves, they could undertake the search for enduring philosophical truth. In retrospect it might be argued that Neo-Scholasticism, while it gave its disciples a sense of the rightness of their position, often failed to impart to them a love for it, something which Dawson's approach to education might have accomplished. Gilson himself, in *The Spirit of Thomism* (1964), criticized some of its practitioners for fashioning a "static" and "sterile" philosophy.

The Catholic intellectual landscape has been unimaginably changed over a twenty-year period—so changed, in fact, that it can hardly even be mapped. Today eclecticism reigns supreme, not only in the choice of philosophies but in matters of Church doctrine as well. The contemporary Catholic intellectual's relationship to his own traditions is at best confused and ambivalent. The subjectivity which Neo-Scholasticism held at bay for so long has come rushing forth with a vengeance, and Catholics are most receptive to every kind of psychological nostrum. In the process, the institutional supports for Catholic intellectual life have themselves been eroded; colleges have been closing their doors, and most of those that survive face an uncertain future. In the meantime they have, for the most part, ceased even to try to form in their students any distinctive way of thinking about the world. A number of Catholic jour-

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nals have ceased publication, and most others find their subscription lists declining. In commercial terms, no market for serious Catholic intellectual work is being created, and the outlets to such markets as do exist are constricted. Most of the books of the twentieth-century revival have gone out of print.

As is usually the case when dominant figures die, a reaction has set in against the leading lights of the revival they impelled. Since so many of them were extraordinarily long-lived (Maritain, 1882–1973; Gilson, 1884–1978; Dawson, 1889–1970; Marcel, 1889–1973), the reaction set in even before their deaths. As early as 1965, for example, Sheed and Ward began to be cool toward publishing Dawson. Maritain's later works that were critical of the "new Church," especially *The Peasant of the Garonne* (1968), were sometimes savaged by Catholic reviewers. The present generation of Catholic college students scarcely knows Gilson, Maritain, Dawson, Mauriac, Waugh, or Bernanos even as names in a textbook.

Almost without exception the leaders of this revival had no quarrel with basic Catholic doctrine and rarely had any even with Catholic practice—a phenomenon not entirely due to Neo-Scholasticism. The existentialist Marcel, for example, gave lectures in the United States in the early 1960s in which he offered poetic, almost mystical support to the ideal of noncontraceptive sex. The phenomenologist Dietrich von Hildebrand, another convert, became the most ardent champion of orthodoxy. Most of the great figures of the revival (Graham Greene alone excepted) expressed greater or less degrees of misgivings about the changes that occurred in the Church after the Second Vatican Council—which was also true of most of the leading theologians whose work had prepared the way for the Council, notably Henri DeLubac, Jean Daniélou, Yves Congar, Louis Bouyer, and Hans Urs von Balthasar.

There are several intriguing ironies in this slaying of the fathers which has occurred since the Council. Contemporary Catholicism wishes to be relevant to the world, and not to rest secure in an ecclesiastical ghetto. Yet no recent Catholic thinker has attempted to explore social and political realities with anything like the comprehensiveness and trenchancy of Maritain or Dawson. It wishes to be taken seriously in secular intellectual circles, yet no Catholic thinker alive today has the respectability in those circles which Gilson, Maritain, Dawson, Mauriac, or Waugh enjoyed. It proclaims the age of the laity, emancipated from clerical dominance. Yet the leading lights of the revival were almost all lay people, while the three most influential thinkers in the contemporary Church—Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, Karl Rahner, and Bernard Lonergan (the latter two still alive)—are Jesuits. (Teilhard's quasi-mystical writings have lent themselves to all kinds of interpretation, and his long-

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range significance is still uncertain. Rahner and Lonergan represent a branch of Thomism which Gilson and Maritain regarded as inauthentic, since it undertakes a dialogue with Kantianism rather than affirming that Thomistic epistemology escapes Kant's strictures. Called "Transcendental Thomism," it has been largely a Jesuit movement.)

The Catholic intellectual revival, apart from its specific content, represented a unique twentieth-century cultural phenomenon—an approach to truth based on the supposition of the normative correctness of certain traditions, and intellectual activity directed primarily at a more profound penetration and exposition of those traditions. The dominant style of modern thought has been contestation of all traditions, and it was largely the Catholic intellectual community's belated reception of that mode of operation which led it to declare irrelevant its own richest flowering.

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How I'd Have It

JOHN STONE

I'd have no flowers
other than Mozart

A suit—blue—
not new, but worn

the knees
still in the trousers

for as long
as polyester is

And a fire
and someone there

to throw on
the oak especially

for the last movement
of the Mozart

As for the mourners
let's have them enter

STAGE LEFT
and pause and peer

over the side
and say mournful

things such as What
A Pity A Pity

And So Old, Too.
And then exit all

STAGE RIGHT

✪ JOHN STONE is a physician in Atlanta, where he teaches at Emory University School of Medicine. *In All This Rain*, his second book of poems, will be published this fall by Louisiana State University Press.

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T.L.S.

WILLIAM HALEY

I have little doubt that all literary journals are convinced that they are equally sui generis. It is not Orwellism, but an openly declared affection, plus a good deal of evidence from other readers, that makes me believe *The Times Literary Supplement* is more sui generis than others. Its absence for a year, due to industrial troubles, has been lamented in many lands. Its reappearance poses two questions: How and to what extent will it be able to repair the rent of twelve months in its role as a journal of scholarship and record? What will prove to have been the effect of a year's silence on its future?

A start has been made to answer the first question. Reclaiming what matters from the past is being spread over a number of issues. Substantial articles on major books published during the blank period are appearing. Books on particular subjects are being covered by a series of roundups, possibly as many as forty of them. Already a considerable number of short reviews of fiction and subjects not easily categorized have been printed. Over fifty lost numbers cannot be easily replaced. At least the basic responsibility is being accepted on a generous scale.

The answer to the journal's future has to be sought in its past. The birth of *The Times Literary Supplement* was far from exemplary. It was the result of a piece of sharp practice on the part of Charles Moberly Bell. As the histories of American and British newspapers have shown, they are the natural homes of oddly inspired characters. Moberly Bell was one of the oddest. Born in Egypt in 1847 and educated in England for entry into the Indian Civil Service, he joined his father's firm in Alexandria instead. His heart was not in that either. To be a writer had been his schoolboy ambition. Soon he was contributing messages to *The Times* of London. He became a confidant of Lord Cromer, the virtual ruler of Egypt, and covered wars and politics for the paper. So impressive was his work that in 1890, at the age of forty-three, he was summoned to London to become the paper's manager. His place in the history of English journalism is secure, for while his secret surrender of *The Times*'s independence to Lord Northcliffe was a betrayal, it did bring in the most powerful journalist-proprietor in the land to save the paper; and the stout rearguard actions of three editors and their staffs held Northcliffe more or less at bay for fourteen years, until death ended his mounting megalomania.

The division of responsibilities between the editor and the manager of *The Times* was not as sharp in those days as it later became. Moberly Bell's inclinations and experience made it impossible for him to keep his hands, let alone his thumb, out of the editorial pie. He appointed and ran the paper's foreign correspondents. He expressed views on policy. He became determined that *The Times* should cover books comprehensively. Long reviews of important works had been a tradition of the paper almost from its beginning in 1785, but they had been selective and sporadic. Bell saw kudos and cash to be gained by embracing the publishing world as a whole. (Later he founded The Times Book Club and embarked on a book price war with all the London publishers.) Meanwhile, in 1897, he published from *The Times* office a sixpenny weekly called *Literature*. It was a strange gallimaufry of essays, interviews with authors, book reviews, personal paragraphs, and international

SIR WILLIAM HALEY was director-general of the British Broadcasting Corporation from 1944 to 1952, and editor of *The Times* (London) from 1952 to 1966.

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literary gossip. (The nine volumes comprising its whole life were reprinted by the Arno Press of New York in 1976; they are delightful to browse in.) But the periodical had no firm center. First one field of interest was exploited. When it failed to attract readers, another was tried. Neither cash nor kudos came. Its last issue was that of January 11, 1902. Bell sold *Literature* to Morgan Richards, the American owner of the *Academy*. On January 17, 1902, purchasers of *The Times* found inside it a free "Literary Supplement" of eight pages. What Mr. Richards thought of that is not known. His combined magazine has long since disappeared.

The Times Literary Supplement celebrated its seventy-fifth birthday three years ago. Its editor is John Gross. There had been six editors before him, all dominated by Sir Bruce Richmond, who held the chair from 1902 to 1937. James Thursfield, *The Times*'s naval correspondent, looked after the first numbers with Richmond's assistance. Soon Richmond was in sole charge and at once gave *The Times Literary Supplement* its abiding character. He was thirty-one when he became editor, having entered Printing House Square, *The Times*'s home from its beginning, by way of the Bar. He had won a prize for Greek prose at Winchester. After his death in 1964, at the age of ninety-three, I was shown a remarkable commonplace book he had kept throughout his life. Spaced through the years were, as I remember them, not more than fifty or so entries in all. Every one was in Greek, occupying a left-hand page, with his translation in English facing it. Every quotation was consistent with his faith and philosophy.

Richmond was a "reading editor." It is said he never wrote an article in the *Supplement*, but he was always on the watch for new writers of distinction. He early marked out the young T. S. Eliot, and sometime around 1920 arranged a meeting, after which Eliot became a regular contributor. Years later Eliot recalled how impressed he had been that a *Times Literary Supplement* review by J. Middleton Murry—of *La Jeune Parque*—first told English readers of the importance of an unknown poet named Paul Valéry. "It seems to me," Eliot once said, "that the period when we had *The Times Literary Supplement* under Richmond and *The Athenaeum* under Murry (we had also for a time *Art and Letters* and *The Calendar*) was the high summer of literary journalism in London in my lifetime." He paid tribute to Richmond "first for the work he gave me and for the discipline of writing for him." That discipline was set out in *The Times*'s obituary notice of Richmond.

> His desire was for well-founded and durable judgment, urbanely though fearlessly expressed, and he was resolved to make his journal so good that writers of the highest eminence should be willing to write in it anonymously and (following the tradition of *The Times*) almost in secret.

Henry James, Robert Bridges, Virginia Woolf, R. W. Chapman, Walter de la Mare, Rose Macaulay, Edmund Blunden, and Percy Lubbock were among them.

Richmond retired in 1937. His successor, D. L. Murray, had to battle with war conditions, the material problems they posed, and the altered appetites brought by those years of stress. They were the years of *The Times Literary Supplement*'s one aberration, its pursuit of popularity. It was not Murray's fault. From 1914 the *Supplement* had been sold separately from *The Times* and had to keep up a circulation. In 1944 Stanley Morison, famous primarily as a typographer, took charge. It was then clear that the war was won. His four years in the chair—he was succeeded by Alan Pryce-Jones in 1948—brought the journal austerely "back to Richmond" and ready to face the postwar world. Arthur Crook preserved the tradition for fifteen years (1959–1974) after Pryce-Jones. Since 1974 John Gross has had it in his hands.

The past is of consequence only by its influence on the present. If tradition imposes anachronism, it becomes a broken thing. Long-established institutions can continue to flourish only if there is a periodic conflict between innovation and tradition. Innovation must win some major battles. The campaign must leave tradition still in command in the newly changed circumstances. Methods alter; principles remain.

John Gross's first revolution on taking charge of the *T.L.S.* (that is now its short title, and it will be less cumbersome to use it hereafter) was to end its writers' anonymity. *The Times*, under William Rees-Mogg, had preceded him in abandoning it. In fact, the prac-

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tice on the parent paper had not always been absolute. When Wickham Steed was editor (1919–1922), his name appeared over some of his dispatches from abroad. Valentine Chirol and a few others had been occasionally allowed similar license.

It can be said that Bruce Richmond's policy of anonymity in the *T.L.S.* was merely in accordance with the general ethos of Printing House Square. It was even more his personal conviction, and he enforced it against some opposition. Doing so, he bequeathed to his successors still greater hostages to fortune. After the war, the *T.L.S.*'s refusal to disclose the names of its contributors aroused increasingly fierce passions. Partiality and personal vendettas were suspected. Both favorable and unfavorable reviews were attributed to base motives. There was exasperation when it became clear that what had been confidently declared to be *secrets de Polichinelle* had been attributed to the wrong Punch. Hostility was at more than one level. It is not only in Grub Street that the world of authordom has been and is a hard, suspicious, and uncharitable one. Tempers can be as bitter in Academia as on Parnassus.

Anonymity is by no means a simple issue. Thomas Barnes, the greatest editor *The Times* has had, made it a rule throughout his reign, from 1817 to 1841. (There was little worth signing in the paper before his day.) "When the first thing a journalist does is to put his name at the head of what he is about to write," he declared, "it thereafter stands permanently between his reader and his subject." Other powerful reasons developed: the idea of *The Times*, "The Thunderer," as a corporate body speaking in its own right gave the paper's views greater authority than any individual writer could command. In my own time as editor I was asked by a Cabinet Minister to tell him who had written a particular leading article. When I refused to do so, he complained, "That's the worst thing about your damned *Times*. I don't need to read So-and-so (in another paper) because I know he carries no guns. I had to read your leader carefully because goodness knows who had written it." Anonymity can also increase longevity. No one worried much about "The Letters of Runnymede" once it was known that Disraeli was their author. "The Letters of Junius" are a challenge to this day. When thirteen years of Tory rule ended in 1964, I invited "A Conservative" to write a series of articles for *The Times*, "On Going into Opposition." I am still asked from time to time who the writer was.

Personally I am in favor of anonymity. Had I not been, I would have ended it. It may be that the circumstances which could hold a band of people together, each satisfied with sharing in a common purpose without individual acknowledgments, no longer exist. I still have greater respect for a view, or a review, offered me by a paper than one presented by a person. Signed writing invites exhibitionism, though it may be unconscious. Reading some very good pieces, I have found myself becoming more interested in the character of the writer than in his subject. T. S. Eliot offered an engaging reason for supporting the *T.L.S.*'s policy of anonymity. When he was a young man, he said, it had enabled him to write also for another journal without any awkward questions arising. The best case for abandoning anonymity is that whether the books being reviewed are academic or political—and many of them are now both—it is no longer possible for the editor of a literary journal to have the omniscience to control all battlegrounds fairly. Areas of controversy have multiplied and widened. Masked infighting can put academic, political, and other reputations unfairly at stake. A tendentious review loses most of its force if the shield of anonymity is withdrawn.

Happily John Gross has shown no inclination to shake the *T.L.S.* loose from its title: he has kept it a *literary* supplement. During my years in the chair at Printing House Square I was on occasions urged to broaden the *T.L.S.* into an arts journal. (As editor of *The Times* I was de jure editor of everything that was published by the company. De facto, the editor of each supplement was left to his own professionalism.) I always refused. I am sure this preservation of books as the main foundation of the *T.L.S.* is right. All other arts—music, painting, sculpture, drama, grand opera, ballet, filmmaking—can be adequately dealt with by reviewing books about them. To cover them directly would dilute the paper's purpose and dissipate its effectiveness. It would also weaken the international character of the *T.L.S.* True, the *T.L.S.* does print some lectures in extenso, whether they are to

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be published or not. It gave the better part of three pages to one of Joseph Alsop's 1978 Mellon lectures, delivered in Washington, on the history of art. Such lectures usually get between covers in the end.

No valid comparison can be made between the leading literary journals of different countries. Each depends on its national character and on the state of its national literature. In France there are *Critique, Tel Quel,* and the *Nouvelle Revue Française,* a veteran that has modernized itself but cannot match the Proust, Gide, Malraux days of my youth. The thrill of reading the first installment of *La Condition humaine* in the *N.R.F.* forty-five years ago, with Tchen trying to make up his mind how to stab the man sleeping beneath the mosquito net, is still vivid. Today some of the most interesting French writing is being devoted to history, anthropology, and linguistics. West Germany has at present a number of authoritative literary magazines, *Merkur, Literatur und Kritik,* and the *Neue Rundschau* among them. But much of today's German literature is inward looking, exorcising past ghosts, going back even to Weimar, appealing to young people trying to make new beginnings.

The *T.L.S.* casts its net widely. It ranges from a review of Italian editions of Eugenio Montale and Italian books about him to one of a German translation of Edward Lear's *Book of Nonsense.* Most exciting in recent years—for me, at any rate—was a long article based on the first volume of the collected works (in Russian) of Vasily Shukshin, a writer completely new to me and, I am sure, to most English readers. (One problem of the *T.L.S.* is that if a book has been reviewed in its original language and is later published in an English translation, the publishers are hurt if it is not fully reviewed all over again.) As for the *T.L.S.*'s range at home, "Ranke, Acton, and the Grand Manner," "The Unicorn Tapestries," "The Politics of the Judiciary," "Virginia Woolf and the Pargiters," "Donald Davies' Imaginary Museum," "Belloc and *The Servile State,*" "Shakespeare at the R.S.C.," "Pears' First Cyclopaedia," and "A Miner's Library" were all listed on the front cover of the first issue of 1978.

For whom is such a periodical as the *T.L.S.* published? Admittedly to a large extent for an elite. Although its sale is not large by modern press standards, its circulation is international. At last count it had readers in 102 countries, and in many of them the ground on which its seeds can be sown is small. Everywhere there must be fertile ground. Scholarly weeklies, monthlies, and quarterlies are not coffee-table decorations. Their casual, idle readers are few. The strength of their readerships is that to some extent each forms a coterie. These coteries are substantially academic. Since the end of the war there have been few more striking developments in the world of higher learning than the frequency and ease with which university dons and their like have traveled the world.

For the British, the newly established universities in Africa were an early responsibility, but cross-fertilization operated nearer home. At the war's end, British professors and lecturers streamed to Germany. Interest in English literature was reawakened in liberated France. Frenchmen who had joined de Gaulle in London, or had been among the refugees, formed literary friendships during their years of exile, and spread an awareness of the newer English authors when they returned home. Francophiles such as Harold Nicolson and Charles Morgan were soon back in Paris—lecturing, circulating in whatever was the postwar equivalent of the literary salons, and imparting and receiving new enthusiasms. The same thing had happened after the 1914–1918 war: Richard Aldington spent some years in France discovering for a new generation of *T.L.S.* readers a whole sweep of French literature from François Villon and Remy de Gourmont to Restif de la Bretonne and Prosper Mérimée. The greatest authority on George Gissing today is Professor Pierre Coustillas of the University of Lille. Thanks to his energy and enthusiasm, the whole of Gissing's works are being reprinted in England. He has translated *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft* and, with Suzanne Calbris, *New Grub Street,* into French. The work of Professor Jacob Korg of the University of Washington and of Shigeru Koike has spread the fame of Gissing west and east.

Culture has often been strongly nationalistic. It has seldom been isolationist. Readers of Dr. Johnson's *Life of Sir Thomas Browne* will remember that Browne traveled as a man of letters to France, Italy, and Holland. A Latin translation of *Religio Medici* was early

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published in both Leyden and Paris. Today, however, such international links are no longer primarily social, but mostly learned and professional. Nowhere is this more the case than in those links between America and Britain. Sharing an almost common language, inheriting—if one goes back far enough—a single literary tradition, the two nations have been enriched by a continual process of mutual adoption that has been going on for a century. Robert Frost's first books of poems were published while he was living in England, and English enthusiasm for them spread his fame to America. It was in England in the 1920s that the revival of Herman Melville began.

On the other side, America has become the center for the study of eighteenth-century English literature. Dr. J. L. Clifford's *Johnsonian News Letter* has long been an indispensable guide to work in progress over the whole range of Johnson's contemporaries. Clifford's death robbed us of the greatest Johnsonian of his time. Fortunately he has left a school of young men, a few now approaching middle age, who will carry on his work. Robert Halsband's love affair with Lady Mary Wortley Montagu has been splendidly fruitful. Edwin Marrs's massive edition of *The Letters of Charles and Mary Anne Lamb* has a toehold in the century. American conferences on eighteenth-century English writers and themes abound. I have not yet seen a convincing reason, except Johnson's all-embracing aura, why United States scholarship has preferred this particular century of English literature to all others. When will it advance to the Victorians?

This common heritage and what may be called tangential paths have made the *T.L.S.* increasingly interested in, and concerned with, American literature. The increase is in direct involvement. It is not likely that the one hundred pages on "American Writing Today" published in 1954, or the huge, more impressive issue on "The American Imagination" in 1959, will soon be repeated. The Gross approach is more practical, also more rewarding. Massive special numbers are all too often put aside to be read at leisure—and stay there. Under Gross's editorship there has been a noticeable increase in the number of American writers in the *T.L.S.* Often but not always—the Shukshin article was suggested and written by an American professor—they write on American subjects. This is a gain, not only because authoritative English reviewers of books on American history and culture are at present scarce. Often a deeper insight is offered than any English reviewer could have given. This is valuable to both readers and reviewers: American works of scholarship are now readily available in England. Most of the larger U.S. university presses have offices in London. Informed judgment on what they are publishing is of increasing importance as prices soar. And the discipline of writing for literary periodicals of other countries benefits reviewers.

Specialists abound, and much of the work I have been describing is done by them. The tag about knowing more and more about less and less is as readily attachable to the contents of a literary periodical as it is to those of scientific and professional ones. A major problem today is that of finding the old-fashioned, all-purpose literary reviewers, the essayists of yesterday. Quiller-Couches, Desmond MacCarthys, Edmund Gosses, and Jack Squires are a sadly reduced tribe. Reading THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR and some other U.S. journals, one has a comforting feeling that their transatlantic brothers are surviving. Maybe that is an illusion. What is a certainty is that a wealth of enjoyment and understanding to be gained from literature will be lost if a new generation of them does not arise.

It has been claimed that the ranks of literary reviewers have to some extent been filled by broadcasters—appreciably on radio, less on television. The satisfactory treatment of books has been a challenge to serious-minded broadcasters in England for over fifty years. It must be said at once that there is little evidence that radio and television have so far reduced reading. New book titles proliferate. Sales of paperbacks are counted in millions, a fair proportion of them being of serious works and classics. More people in this generation have read the great works of ancient Greece and Rome and of modern nations than in any earlier period. Broadcasting has itself produced some literature: in England series of talks on the Third Programme have been broadcast as a preliminary to their appearance between covers. Television too has contributed. Jacob Bronowski's *The Ascent of Man*, Kenneth Clark's *Civilisation*, John Ken-

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neth Galbraith's *The Age of Uncertainty*, and Magnus Magnusson's *The Archaeology of the Bible Lands* all had their genesis when a man and a television camera came together. More modestly, but probably more valuably, radio readings and dramatizations of such masterpieces as *Jane Eyre* and *The Heart of Midlothian* have swept them off the shelves of the public libraries into the homes of Britain. Unfortunately, only a very small number of them can be dealt with by the most enlightened broadcasting system. And while the popularization of great works is splendid, the pervasiveness and persuasiveness of broadcasting all too often inflate the reputation of books that are ephemeral and trivial.

All this may seem another world from that of the *T.L.S.* But the *trahison des clercs* continues in more ways than one. Just as the English newspapers have, to their own detriment, adopted television's values of issues and personalities, so in some universities there is a form of inverted snobbery among some of the younger academics which asserts that the good is the enemy of the popular and that it is the masses who count. The *T.L.S.*, which reviews fiction seriously and shows a nice discrimination in crime novels, together with its more learned contents, can keep the balance on the right side.

A question mark hangs over the poetry it publishes. I think more is printed under the Gross regime than in the time of his predecessors. Each issue contains a number of poems by different hands, sometimes a sequence. Current English poetry is a prickly subject. The poetry world is in disarray, and poets are intolerant people. While to aged readers such as myself the *T.L.S.*'s poetry is outlandishly modern, there are those in the new generation who accuse the *T.L.S.* of being overcautious. The poetry it prints is not avant-garde enough for them. Steering a way between the two extremes, the paper has eschewed what may be called party lines. In the choice of the poems it prints, the *T.L.S.* today is influenced more by reputation than it is in other forms of literature. Its aim is to give its readers a reasonably fair cross-section of poetry by authors who are getting books of poetry published. Whether the poetry it prints pleases readers or not is not its concern. Here it is acting as informant, not as advocate.

One field in which the *T.L.S.* has a long-established position, and which has aroused no challenge, is that of literary discovery. Just as medical men, lawyers, physicists, and engineers reserve their findings for their professional journals, so there is the expectation that newly discovered literary documents, letters, and historic writings in English—in rare cases in French and Italian—shall first be made known in the *T.L.S.* Their meaning may be disputed, but not their good faith. So far as I know, the *T.L.S.* has never been hoaxed, as its parent paper was by a poem alleged to have been written by Rudyard Kipling in 1918. (*The Times* was so shocked that at first it doubted Kipling's assurance that it was not his.) The *T.L.S.* also acts as a rialto for historians, biographers, and other literary researchers. Its "Information, Please" columns not only cast the writers' nets; they can also warn other writers off duplication. These are quiet pastures; polemics are in the "Letters" columns. High feelings sweep into the office from many countries, often none higher than those from America. A lively anthology could be compiled of literary battles fought in the *T.L.S.*'s correspondence columns.

So far, so good. But how much farther? It is time the ghost of Napoleon's mother joined the feast: "provided that it lasts." How long *will* it last? What will be the fortunes of the *T.L.S.* and its fellows as they advance to the twenty-first century? All things vanish eventually into the sands of time. In Britain the *Edinburgh Review* and the *Quarterly* were mighty in their day. Now they are only history. As influential a writer as John Stuart Mill could not save the *London and Westminster Review*. In our own lifetime the literary brilliance of the *Westminster Gazette* was of no avail. One reason may be found in the fact that none of these was concerned exclusively with literature. They were political also, and nothing is more ephemeral than contemporary politics. It is true that between the two world wars John Middleton Murry's *Adelphi* and Desmond MacCarthy's *Life and Letters* suffered the same fate, although they were not political. They had the brief effulgence of asteroids because they were the production of amateurs. The *T.L.S.* is professional. Its longevity and prestige are not likely to betray it into the illusion that was said to have bemused Goethe and Tolstoy—

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that they were possibly destined to be immortal. But its present ownership and the character of those directing its fortunes should ensure its passage to its centenary and beyond.

There is the larger question of whether the primacy of the printed word will survive. Georges Duhamel forecast its eclipse more than forty years ago. Time and again it has been prophesied that broadcasting will take over. So far it has failed to do so, but suppose that by some miracle television grew up and matured. And what about the even newer means of communication? Those who conjure up such bogeys overlook one fact: however much the idealists in radio and television would like to spread truth, beauty, and ideas, they cannot free broadcasting from the virus of popular entertainment. This constantly threatens to infect all programs, and does so in the end.

There is another point. It is not fanciful to see the dominance of the various forms of popular entertainment in this century as having been subject to what can loosely be called a thirty years' cycle. The English music hall's modern heyday ran from about 1890 to 1920, by which year it had been largely overtaken by the silent film (1900–1930). At the same time that the silent film was being killed by talking pictures (1926 onward), radio was beginning to make inroads on the cinema and other forms of entertainment, and by 1956 was itself, together with talking pictures, having to give precedence to television. It would be foolish to suggest that television will have passed its peak by 1986, but that it will take up less of the family's leisure time is a reasonable assumption. Already there are signs that the young are freeing themselves from its tyranny. Great sporting events and historic occasions will enable television to continue to command the attention of multitudes. It will continue to provide news headlines. But if education is true to its proper purpose, then for future generations television will be no more than a minor adjunct in the major adventure of living a full life.

Much is being made of associated devices, facsimile news and so on, but these can have little effect. Their use will remain limited. The screen skeletonizes everything. It anchors its viewers and denies even the eye the liberty to rove. Its service must, by the nature of the medium, remain sparser and slower than that of any volume, newspaper, or magazine. Microfilmed libraries, talking books, and other gadgets offer little more than a few grains of the cultural harvest of centuries. Our more properly educated children's children, and the great proportion of the world's millions still to become literate, will in the next century demand the whole loaf. In the beginning was the word, and the most productive way of spreading words is to print them on paper. No matter what new enchantments and distractions the ingenuity of man may create, there should be a growing army ready to echo Lord Grey's welcome to some unexpected guests at Fallodon: "What would you like to do? We are reading."

In that faith it is appropriate to quote John Gross's epilogue to *The Rise and Fall of the Man of Letters:*

> Whatever the future holds, the first qualification for being a good critic will always be an interest in literature for what it is, rather than for the ends which it can be made to serve. But the second qualification, no less essential, will be a commitment to the life which is beyond literature, by which it must be finally judged. Criticism remains the most miscellaneous, the most ill-defined of occupations. At any given moment it is liable to start turning into something else; history or politics, psychology or ethics, autobiography or gossip. In a world which favours experts and specialists this means that the critic is increasingly liable to be dismissed as a dilettante or resented as a trespasser. But if his uncertain status often puts him at a disadvantage, it also makes possible, ideally, the breadth and independence which are his ultimate justification. In this sense at least, however archaic it may seem in other respects, the idea of the man of letters has a place in any healthy literary tradition.

So long as it adheres to that faith, the future of the *T.L.S.* should be assured.

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Two Poems

ANDREW GROSSBARDT

In the High Country

Early this morning I woke alone
in the small world of the tent
and dressed in the dark
trying to remember
my first good dream in years.
Outside last night's fire of scrub oak
and juniper still glowed in the dawn.
Across the stream a few cottonwoods
stirred in wind I could not feel.

Someone tell me quickly
before I have to leave
how Snow Canyon got its name,
why the brown mare stumbles
near the fallen willow,
where all this light begins.

Beneath the crazed geometry of rock
I wait for the blessing of light
as the last ruined stars fade
as the light gathers
and the humming of a single bee
stuns the air from silence.
A lone fisherman wades far downstream.

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Bluefishing

Early morning. A thin scum of oil lies
slack across the gentle swell and a few
fish heads bob near the docks. The gray air
hangs close as we angle through the shallows
of Barnegat Bay. No one talks and each man
feels his own body turning slightly foreign.

I close my eyes as the motor opens
straining the silence. The dunes soften
and blur in the dim half-light until
the last stretch of land turns neutral as sky.
In the distance, a few gulls are the first sign,
then small boats working through the chop.

Behind us, the feathered lures are moving,
alive. For hours we circle the gulls waiting
for anything the ocean brings—shadow,
sudden movement, or broken water—
until one line runs out, then another
humming its peculiar tune. I hold my pole,

strain against some presence, denser than water,
beneath the surface. The strikes come quickly
and soon the boat is specked with blood and scales
as dying fish thrash on the deck, the flesh
itself raging at the touch of air.

Their muscles quiver less frequently;
their bodies grow grayer as something vague
passes from their lives. And from this life
something passes too. We head for shore
in the near dark of early evening
and I shudder at what is lost.

✪ ANDREW GROSSBARDT, a teacher at the University of Utah whose work appeared in *The New Yorker*, the *Nation*, and other journals, died last summer.

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TEACHING

John William Miller

GEORGE P. BROCKWAY

John William Miller taught philosophy at Williams College from 1924 to 1960; and for the next eighteen years, until his death on Christmas Day 1978, he talked philosophy with his former students, for whom his house was always open and to whom he wrote marvelous and marvelously voluminous letters, some more than a hundred pages long. Until a few months before his death he had published only four essays, one in an undergraduate magazine and all of them more or less technical; yet he taught and left detailed notes for vigorous and original courses in epistemology, aesthetics, ethics, the history of philosophy, logic, metaphysics, the philosophy of history, psychology, and the state.

At one time he held the informal record of having the largest number of former students doing graduate work in philosophy at Harvard, but he derived special satisfaction from his continuing association with those who became historians, doctors, lawyers, and businessmen. He said that history was the history of thought; at the same time he felt that businessmen were doing the work of the world and that one of the weaknesses of intellectuals—he thought they had many weaknesses—lay in their supercilious indifference to such matters. He took pride in the familiarity with cost accounting he had gained in his father's business.

The Williams senior class regularly voted him the teacher "whose personality has influenced you most" and frequently "best lecturer." The yearbook was three times dedicated to him—once while he was a visiting professor at Minnesota, in celebration of his imminent return to Williams.

Miller was a tall, large-boned man of unfailing courtliness. A favorite word with him was "presence," by which he meant proclaiming one's thought in one's actions and accepting in one's thought the implications of one's actions. His own presence was powerful and immediately felt by all his students. He made none of the usual plays for popularity. His classes did not start with warm-up jokes, nor did he make regular-guy references to football games or house parties. He demanded decorum in his classrooms; if you slouched or put your feet up on the seat in front of you, he made a sharp impersonal comment on the meaning of courtesy. You didn't do it again.

Early in his career, he had the misfortune to find himself in competition with the senior man in his department, who wrote him several letters, which he preserved, of ambivalently avuncular advice on his teaching. From these it can be inferred that even as a very young man he made extraordinary demands on his students, and that they responded enthusiastically by following him to his office and to his home for long extracurricular discussions, often of matters barely touched on in class.

Anyone calling on him in his office or his home was greeted with a formal but warm handshake and an assurance of welcome. Almost immediately, with little or no small talk intervening, conversation would begin on a question that had been exercising him or his visitor. At appropriate hours something to eat or drink might be offered; in his younger days it could have been homemade wine. At the end of the session he would gravely thank the visitor for breaking up his "routine," when all

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around him piles of uncorrected examinations and term papers testified to his resistance to routine.

For him the method of philosophy was Socratic. One started where one was—local control, he called it—and proceeded to articulate the implications. Sophomore empiricists, of whom there were always many, were asked what they could possibly mean, on their premises, by "no" and "not": "Can you *see* no elephants?" Sophomore dogmatists, who were equally many, were led to understand the occasion of skepticism in the clash of dogmas. His senior logic course started with a question: "What sort of universe would a logical universe be?" He was perhaps happiest when some student, imbued with the pluralism of William James, replied, "A block universe." Then a dialogue would begin, eventually involving the entire group, which rarely exceeded ten or twelve in the prewar years when Williams mustered fewer than a hundred and fifty seniors. In a heady hour that frequently continued past the class-ending bell, students would be led to say and see that logic is inherently incomplete, implying continuums at both ends and so the possibility of, and occasion for, new discoveries. A logical universe would be similarly and—to use another of his favorite terms—constitutionally incomplete. Since logic, moreover, is a study in connections, a logical universe would be intraconnected and articulated—in short, very much like the universe we know and not a block universe at all.

To say that students were stimulated by such discussions would be a colorless understatement. I remember especially my first formal introduction to the idea of cause, which ended with Miller's writing on the board the conclusion that "Universal causation is the refutation of mechanism." For anyone like me, and indeed for most "literary" undergraduates of that day, who had hitherto learned quietism from Hardy or Housman, such a conclusion was shattering.

The demands Miller made of us were not merely intellectual. "There is," he said, "just one quality in every man which he must change at least once; he must change his philosophy." He continued: "Only in the discovery of some fatal threat to himself in the framework of his inheritance can he discover freedom." Volumes could be written with this dictum as a text, but here it will serve to indicate that he saw philosophy as an enterprise involving the whole man in inescapable ways. To change one's philosophy was no light matter, and he treated students in their turmoil with the most delicate respect.

With undergraduates he was no missionary for a Millerian point of view, and he was proud of his success in directing attention to problems rather than to his answers. Philosophy did not, he said, offer information about the world that could be proved or disproved and memorized, as one could prove or disprove and memorize Boyle's Law. Beginning students were therefore frequently puzzled. They were used to being told what to believe. In other courses they learned that the Corn Laws were attacked and defended for specific reasons that could be underlined in the textbook, that osmosis worked in a certain way, that Leonardo had unfortunately painted *The Last Supper* in something other than *buono fresco*. But Philosophy 1–2 provided no answers, only questions that, once raised, would not go away. He insisted only that the questions be faced and the consequences of one's answers deliberately accepted.

His devoted students did not fall into any predictable pattern of thought. They included men who became Anglican bishops, Roman Catholic priests, Protestant clergymen, and professional philosophers of several persuasions. At a Williams College colloquium in 1978, honorary degrees were awarded to five alumni who were presidents of other colleges. When they discussed what had meant most to them in their education, it turned out that all had studied under Miller and all remembered him vividly. "He was," one said, "a person who frightened me and thrilled me." Another said that his choice of a career came from Miller's "having challenged me and pushed me to the wall."

Miller was not in any way indulgent of his students' whims. Agreement was not compelled, but understanding was required. No one got a high mark for denying free responsibility and simultaneously asserting morality. At the same time no one got a high mark for regurgitating lecture notes. Miller gave very few high marks anyhow. He happened to preserve the record of one course's grades; it

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shows only five A's in two sections totaling seventy-five students, and this was a postwar class, when the "gentleman's C" was no longer fashionable.

The courses varied from year to year, partly because they were to some degree shaped by the problems brought by the students, and partly because Miller himself was always alert for new insights, always searching for new ways to express old ones. His bibliographical notes for Philosophy of the State, a one-semester course he offered to seniors, are on two hundred five-by-eight cards. His notes, queries, and more or less detailed studies of particular topics occupy several hundred pages in notebooks, in blank examination books, and even on the backs of cardboard posters (he cut these in half and found them convenient to write on when held in his lap).

In spite of his immersion in the history of philosophy, and although he was awesomely well read in all the humanities and the sciences as well, he was not a scholar in the ordinary sense and did not consider himself one. Of many of his contemporaries he read only enough to catch the drift of their thought. "It is," he wrote, "always difficult in dealing with the history of philosophy to demonstrate that a figure in a standard textbook ought to be in the textbook. There are those who would stop the story with St. Thomas, and others favor John Locke, holding, with James, that philosophy goes around Kant, not through him." As for himself, he was particularly impatient with the various analytic and positivistic schools. That their essentially ahistoric positions should be in the ascendant in his time no doubt aggravated the feeling of isolation to which he, like many undergraduate teachers, was prone. In any event, his study of the past was not in search of arguments or debater's points. To one correspondent he wrote: "Give me *your* views. I can quote authorities, too, but it won't get us anywhere because my authorities are your follies. Authority in thought means to me what must be taken into consideration, no more. But, I should say that I think anyone who ventures into thought must be taken into consideration."

The senior man in the department called himself a critical realist and had written several books on the subject. Miller had studied under Josiah Royce and with special intensity under William Ernest Hocking, and in defending their idealism against the realist attack came to a more comprehensive understanding of their weaknesses as well as those of the attacker. The result was a lifelong study of epistemology. He early came to the conclusion that the ancient problem of universals and the equally ancient problem of appearance and reality had no solutions on passive terms, that a passive observer was a self-contradiction, and that the consequences of active observation were profound and pervasive. Act, actuality, acting, action became central words in his lexicon.

A hasty reviewer of Miller's book *The Paradox of Cause and Other Essays*, noting this trend in his thought, oddly mistook him for a follower of Dewey's instrumentalism. But Miller was concerned with the conditions of action and with the self-maintenance of those conditions. His ethics considered how it was possible to do any deed at all. His logic considered how it was possible to make a meaningful assertion.

Though all of his students were exposed to his thought—for he lived by talking—it is fair to say that none of us came close to encompassing it. There were at least three reasons for this.

The first was that his thought was truly original. Nothing in our previous training or experience prepared us for it. We were predisposed to misunderstand, to fail to see. I still have my notes for Phil. 1. His position is substantially there in those notes, which I thought I understood, and I didn't see it at all. I didn't even begin to see it until two years later, and now, forty-five years later, I still rediscover points I dutifully but uncomprehendingly made note of then.

He knew he was breaking new ground—there was no false modesty about him—but he did not appreciate how difficult it was for others to follow. It was difficult for professional philosophers no less than for laymen—and this quite apart from a professional's commitment to his own point of view. He said, no doubt overstating the case somewhat, that only Hocking, among professionals, showed interest in his essay "Accidents Will Happen" when it was first published in the *Journal of*

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Philosophy. Ten and fifteen years later he was puzzled and even hurt that "History and Humanism" and "The Midworld" seemed to meet considerable incomprehension when he read them before the Harvard Philosophy Club. In recent years he was, I know, sincerely offended that his dictum, "The universal is the form of the actual," did not find an immediate response. The first time I begged him for an elucidation, he impatiently changed the subject. He had no audience, he said, and I had to confess myself an inadequate one, though I could see that he was subtly distancing himself from Hegel.

The second reason why so much of his thought eluded us was that it was constantly developing. The admittedly clumsy term "the midworld," which will be central to a forthcoming book of his later work, was not used by him in my undergraduate days, and the distinction he made between artifacts and "functioning objects"—another clumsy term —was not defined until a few years ago. These are only two examples of many that could be cited.

Finally, none of us knew more than a part of him—because there were so many of us. He made, he said, a point of taking a man at his word. Taking each man at his word, meeting each student on his own ground, he had many grounds to cover. With one of us he would explore abnormal psychology; with another, the common law; with a third, existentialism; with a fourth, the philosophy of history; with three of us in my senior year, aesthetics. Sometimes this was done by way of directing honors work, and sometimes it led to formal courses in the catalogue, but more often it was done for the love of it. God knows we loved him for it.

In all this there was one thing he could not abide: debating. In his essay "Idealism and History" (included in *The Paradox of Cause*), he writes: "The practice of teaching philosophy by argument is widespread. But any such procedure is the plainest evidence that nothing necessary can result. . . . There is no conventional philosophy, but only the free discovery by the individual of his own reality through a wholly free activity." Again, in "History and Humanism," he says, "For I do think it is at last a matter of exhibition rather than of abstract argument." Nietzsche's superman, he remarks in "Utopia and the State," "can be tamed, because he can be argued with." Any of us who tried quickly found that Miller himself could not be tamed.

Sometimes he expressed his aversion to debate with terrifying ferocity. I remember him once terminating discussion of a point by turning on the friend who had been arguing for it all evening. "No," he said abruptly. "No. It's no good arguing. I *hate* what you're supporting." I have been shown letters he wrote to others castigating their arguments in terms that make you gasp, and I have received one or two such letters myself. It is probable that some good men were thus driven away—to their loss, and no doubt to his, too. In a possibly autobiographical comment in "Accidents Will Happen" he writes, "There are beliefs, moods, conflicts, attitudes which seem impervious to modification." Certainly there were situations in which his usual tact and courtesy were unpredictably overridden.

It was not that he would not suffer fools. In my sophomore year I worked out a monstrous amalgam of Unitarianism with Hardyesque determinism. Aglow with foolish enthusiasm, I sought him out in his office and read him my manifesto. He listened gravely, managed to find something to comment on in the midst of my absurdities, and sent me away with the feeling I had been taken seriously. And indeed he would take seriously any student who showed even the most misconceived willingness to grapple with his own thought.

But of course Miller was not all solemn seriousness. He enjoyed laughter at his own expense. He told with relish how a camping companion, the then assistant dean (there were only one dean and one assistant dean in those innocent days), called him the Prince of Darkness. He appreciated the campus pun that identified him as the Phantom of the Apriori (like many who respect language, he enjoyed puns). His favorite actor was W. C. Fields, who could make him laugh until the tears came, his hand held over his mouth in a characteristic gesture. He loved Gilbert and Sullivan and could quote long passages from them. He himself had a secret talent for light verse and once recited for us a naughty ballad he had composed while in the ambulance service in World War I; so far as I know this

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has nowhere been reduced to writing. It was on a beer picnic in Flora's Glen (previously celebrated as the inspiration for Bryant's "Thanatopsis") that several of us first began to know him. Many years later he suggested that his book be dedicated "To the Williamstown Utopian and Beer Picnic Society." With some misgivings I suppressed the tribute.

For forty years I tried off and on to get him to let me publish a book of his writings. Several times I thought I had persuaded him, only to have him back away. Once he even signed a contract for his dissertation, but it was clear enough that his intention—and that, too, of the founder of my firm, the late Warder Norton—was merely to boost my morale as I entered the army. At the time of his retirement I put together, with the help of a friend, a collection that contained most of the essays he ultimately published; yet still he hesitated.

In a letter that became the essay "Functioning Objects, Facts, and Artifacts," he wrote, a year before his death, "I have promises to keep and cannot keep them all." Then he quoted the seventeenth-century poet James Graham:

> He either fears his fate too much
> Or his deserts are small
> Who will not put it to the touch
> To win or lose it all.

Having once put it to the touch, he was ready to do it again. Just before his death he was working again on the idea of nature. He remarked that there are only two "philosophies"—the philosophy of history and the philosophy of science. He had advanced far beyond his dissertation topic, *The Definition of the Thing*, but the problem was not fundamentally different—only greatly evolved.

He wrote incessantly, more often than not letters he didn't send or essays he never quite finished. Several of the latter were typed by his students and circulated in a sort of *samizdat* and eventually included in the one book he published in his lifetime. He was much concerned with style, sometimes contending (falsely) that he had none and sometimes that philosophical discourse had none. These contentions were variants of his notion that philosophy was a one-on-one affair. Nevertheless Miller left at least a dozen drafts of the start of the first chapter of a book on the philosophy of history. He proposed a rough outline in a letter to me and made notes, sometimes extensive, for the succeeding chapters. These are brilliant and will be published, but they also intensify our regret for what might have been.

As I reread what I have written, I see that I have described the ideal teacher in the ideal undergraduate college. I'll not back away from that. I was awakened and stimulated by other great teachers—the late David Brown, then also of Williams, chief among them—but my life was permanently shaped by Bill Miller. I can name almost three hundred other students whose experience was similar, and for each one I can name there must be several I have not had contact with. Miller's influence on us was through his presence; his presence resulted from his taking us at our word and insisting that we take him at his word. He was generous, not merely with his time but with his thought. His thought was deceptively simple, as in the little essay "History and Case History"—actually an extract from a letter—printed in the pages that follow; but for anyone who can grasp it, nothing will ever be the same again.

Of all the men of his time whom I have known, he was the wisest, and justest, and best.

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History and Case History

JOHN WILLIAM MILLER

Physicians talk of "case history," as do psychiatrists. I hold that case *history* is a confusion.

A medical man keeps a *record*. Neither the patient nor the physician is making history. I go to a medical doctor because I expect him to identify the *sort* of ailment I *happen* to have and then to know what remedy to apply to my sort of disease, in this *case* an application of ice, in that of heat.

Diagnosis is identification of a sort of object or state of affairs. We discover what peculiar condition accounts for an equally peculiar effect. Say your car's engine lacks smoothness; you may think a spark plug fouled, but the mechanic says it's the carburetor. He makes a test to verify his diagnosis. The physician operates in a similar way: takes temperature, pulse, respiration, perhaps sends a specimen to the laboratory or takes an X ray, all to say in the end that he finds symptoms of appendicitis. Your condition is that of a case. You are not unique. Others have had that ailment, and you hope that the doctor has had plenty of experience with that *sort* of disease. When it comes to one's disease one hopes not to be original; one prefers to be a "case" so that the doctor will have some idea about treatment. That is not the way to egotism, but it is the way to medical cure.

You damn a man when you can classify him as a mere sort of thing. No sort of thing is unique. We wish to be unique. If so, one had better not have a medically curable disease. It is humiliating to have the dentist say, "Take two aspirin." He says that to others, to anyone, to people of whom I have a low opinion. He shows me no respect at all. I am a case.

You take some satisfaction in your auto. As is said, it is an "extension" of your personality. All the advertising encourages that attitude. But the garageman tells you that what your car needs is a new spark plug and he takes one from a box, one of several. You drive out with no more personal distinction than I could command in the old days with my Model A Ford. Not a bit. Of course, the mechanic also has his bedside manner; but actions speak louder than words, and he put a plug into my Ford just as he did in another's Imperial. As Burke observed, "Calamity is a mighty leveler."

Now, what are we to do about this relegation to a mere case? The fact is that we have prided ourselves on scientific achievements, and science has no place for the ego, for egotism, for the original. To satisfy purposes you have to understand what sort of object you have to deal with. You get down to cases, as we say. Insofar as science is also technology, it is "know-how" in specific cases. Our common detergents contain phosphorus; this causes pollution in lakes and rivers. What cleaning agent can avoid the specific effects of such a chemical? What *sort* of thing can wash clothes and not promote the growth of weeds in Lake Erie, monopolizing oxygen and killing off the fish? We deal in cases. Be vaccinated and avoid a case of smallpox, but for measles some other antitoxin is required. Knowledge of cases brings control. It gets results, or avoids them.

It seems not too much to say that the rise of such power appears as a chapter in history. It gave us a turn. There was a *Novum Organum*, a new method. The very earth was a case of a gravitational body, to many a shocking disclosure. Science seeks the uniformities that permit us to say that the earth is a case of gravitational order. Mere "data" are absolute. A case never is. It assumes a regularity. That is why I take aspirin for my toothache and get a new spark plug for my car. I do not put an aspirin tablet in the gas tank to cure a sputtering engine; I am not a radical empiricist. I hold with law and order, a very much assailed temper nowadays. Yes, I will have

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cases. I insist on it. I pay money to doctors because they understand my case and do not prescribe aspirin when my peculiar ailment requires nux vomica.

An early factor in the environment of cases was the atom. The atom has a history. There was, for example, the hypothesis of Avogadro that made a distinction between the atom and the molecule. That a molecule could be composed of several atoms is said to have led to the development of chemistry in the nineteenth century. It opened up procedure. It gave new definition to oxygen and hydrogen. That an element could be diatomic permitted an understanding of many chemical substances and their changes.

Discoveries that modify procedure are historic; everyone who, like me, has had only one course in chemistry has heard of Avogadro. Now the question: Is Avogadro a case? Is chemistry itself a case? Is history a case? I say not. The atom is not a case within any inclusive genus. It does not "happen," as I happen to catch the grippe. I cannot go to Arizona to avoid atoms or indeed any constitutional factor of experience, any historical factor. Nor can environmental engineers arrange a healthier climate, more convenient or pleasing circumstances, by eliminating atoms, genera and species, yardsticks, clocks, balances, voltmeters, and dictionaries. There is one way out: you can take drugs. If you survive, you are back in the same demanding environment. Having expanded consciousness, you will be wanting your supper.

I should have trouble telling of what the history of chemistry or of America is a case, something that "happens" and could, perhaps, have been avoided. We take steps not to become a case of grippe. We stay out of crowds or keep the children from school. Cigarette smoking may bring on a case of cancer; one quits the habit. It seems awkward to say that geometry or chemistry "happened" to us. A world without bridge is not impossible, and I hazard that even tennis is more of a diversion than a necessity. The Russians play chess, not bridge. But in all such cases one has to do a bit of counting. Any tennis player can count as high as forty.

A world without smallpox seems not impossible. Why not, then, a world without mathematics, physics, or history? We take pains to perpetuate mathematics and other sciences—an odd thing to do if they were accidental events falling within an environment, like measles or a bad spark plug. Alas, there seems no cure for mathematics, no specific remedy for ridding us of all of this harassing obsession.

You may say that math is a case of learning. If so, you must, I believe, be able to show "learning" in the absence of math, just as you show health in the absence of measles, or even sickness without that malady. Be learned, but omit all numbers—as, for example, that you eat three times a day or have one wife and live nearer to one neighbor than to the other, who lives twice as far away, fortunately. Even to say one had two eyes and one nose would beg the question. Math and history are not cases of something called learning but rather are learning itself. I do meet people who say that math is a "tool" and language a handy utility—as if they could live without numbers and words as their grandfathers lived without autos; not so well, maybe, although one could argue the point on the premises.

Where I get into really deep trouble is in saying that psychology is not a case of anything but, like math and logic, is a constitutional factor, that it has a history but does not define history any more than it defines physics. There is no more a history in terms of psychological hysteria than in terms of physiological measles. There is no case of which it is an aberration. No difficulty that makes history is psychological. Any such difficulty, like that faced by Avogadro, is posed in terms of structure and procedure.

Psychiatry can tell what you have become (say hysterical, elated, depressed, fantastic) in terms of what you are, or are taken to be, as a matter of fact. The libido, for example, is a fact. Certain modes of satisfying it are facts, a sexual mode perhaps. Of course I consider it odd that anything that "is so" could generate conflict; but passing that by, I would say that in history there are no original "facts" at all. When you first meet the idea that no historian ever tells you what is so you may well be surprised. But how can he? If you want to know what is so about the stars, you ask an astronomer; for the composition of aspirin you

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ask a chemist; for the medical virtue of aspirin you ask the physician; and so on. And you certainly do not ask a historian about your auto, what kind of gas to use or where to get a good trade-in. The historian does not tell you what is so.

Well, what has he to say, then? What he says is only that at some dated time—not clock time—such-and-such stories were told about nature, God, and man. Then he notes a change in the way stories were told. He speaks of what was done, but not of every sort of doing—not of walking over a field, boiling a cabbage, spanking a child, smoking a pipe. On such terms we should all be mentioned in History 1-2 and should charge prejudice if our own acts were passed over. The doing that he reports is a critical doing, one that changed outlook, redirected energies, made men conscious of themselves in a new way. Newton, Avogadro, Darwin did such things. The deeds of history are the critical deeds, those that give a new shape to action itself. Attempt to describe such deeds in terms of theology, physics, or psychology, and they are no longer historical. They become "cases" of some ahistoric and static order. All "theories" of history try to do just that. They want to stand outside history and view it as an episode, a happening, like measles or a spell of rainy weather.

History deals in acts. Any act is the voice of a design, of a general and universal order. It is only the act that makes history possible, and only history that makes the act possible. It is act itself that has provided the very terms that have called it into question—physical and psychological terms. Those very terms have been hammered out of serious and constitutional difficulties, not accidental discomforts in an otherwise quiet world, not specific discomforts calling for specific remedies while normal life goes on and all our troubles get ascribed to a vague fortune. The historical act shows the difficulty as the very man. He is the same as the difficulty. The historical act declares a world in a constitutional aspect. It is a revelation, a disclosure, a declaration. Psychology describes no act, no originality, no constitutional novelty, no composition.

I am not attacking psychology. On the contrary, I am defending it. To defend it one has to put the psychological in its place among other constitutional and self-defining factors. One has to see its necessity. One has to say that the psychological is no more a case of something or other than is mathematics, physics, logic, or the dictionary.

When you see a supposed historian treating the Renaissance or Reformation as a phenomenon to be "explained" on other than purely historical grounds, you can spot the psychologist or sociologist or perhaps the theologian. He makes a "case" of it. Action is not a case of anything. Cases derive from action, not action from cases. The authority of psychology rests on its historical emergence.

A case is always described in terms of abstractions that do not define the present or, of course, the past. The physician takes your temperature. He takes mine. You describe a case in terms that are general, abstract, nonindividual. That is why "case history" is a contradiction. A case *record* describes a *sort* of event, not a unique one.

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Learning from the Fotomat

JAMES C. A. KAUFMANN

The ways in which we understand the past are many, and all are imperfect. What really went on at a given time in history is a difficult, if not an impossible, question to answer. When we try to repossess the elusive past, we often turn to photographs, with the thought that they offer a certain kind of proof about the way things were. If the past was a mirror which is now broken, photographs are pieces of that mirror.

In our attempts to understand our personal and intimate past, we go back to our family photograph albums whose images commemorate the ritual events that typify our social world. In snapshots, these events are rendered in the "plain style." The family photographer takes pictures of anniversaries, birthdays and other parties, graduations, and so on, and the snapshot record seldom reveals that these events took place in anything but perfect tranquillity. Hard times of any sort are not material for family photograph albums, because the inclusion of images with unpleasant associations would mar the genial atmosphere that characterizes these albums. Also, when crises occur, the family is actively involved in them—the camera would only intrude.

Because family photograph albums rarely present anything disagreeable, many see them as incomplete records of life, or as catalogues of senseless social ritual. Those who value direct and unmediated experience—that is, those who dislike ritual events—are especially scornful of family photograph albums. In Jack Kerouac's novel *On the Road*, Sal Paradise and Dean Moriarty, two characters greatly interested in spontaneous, intuitive experience, look through a photograph album. Kerouac writes:

> Dean took out other pictures. I realized these were all the snapshots which our children would look at someday with wonder, thinking their parents had lived smooth, well-ordered, stabilized-within-the-photo lives and got up in the morning to walk proudly on the sidewalks of life, never dreaming the raggedy madness and riot of our actual lives, our actual night, the hell of it, the senseless emptiness.

But it is precisely because we don't "walk proudly on the sidewalks of life," because our lives are not "smooth" or "well-ordered," and because we fear "senseless emptiness" that so many of us treasure our family photograph albums. To admit that they mean little and say less is to live with chaos. The purpose of the ritualistic making of photographs for a family album is not to reveal random truths, but to sanctify experience. And the ritual of making family photographs—like most strategies for ordering experience—begins with denial: comprehensive history is never the aim of the family photograph album. Family snapshots are magical objects in the world of undisputed truth that we imagine all photographs inhabit. Therefore they serve as talismans which enable us to ward off the suspicion that our lives lack significance. Family albums offer soothing evidence that our lives are better and more coherent than we sometimes believe. They provide proof that we have observed the requisite pieties, performed the obligatory acts.

The use of such words as *pieties*, *ritual*, and *sanctify* suggests that family photography performs a religious function. The act of making a family photograph is an act of benediction, and the resulting picture is a sacred object which blesses the less than perfect lives

JAMES C. A. KAUFMANN has written articles for *Image*, the *New Art Examiner*, and the *New Boston Review*.

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we lead. As in religion, there is magic involved in family photographs. In one sense, of course, all images are magical because they subdue time. When we look at a family photograph album, it allows us to recapture moments of the past. Because these albums deal with memory and emotion, they can conjure up alternate versions of history. But this does not mean that family photograph albums hold no truth. The objects from which we make our histories, as Benedetto Croce says, "are not in fact documentation unless they stimulate and hold fast in [us] the memory of states of mind which are [ours]."

History is more a product of emotional necessity than it is a repository of facts; as time slips away from us, it leaves a residue of feeling, not fact, and that is what we remember. Denotative meaning drains out of events over time, and is replaced by connotation. It may be, as Wright Morris claims, that "when we say 'How well I remember!' invariably we remember poorly. It is the emotion that is strong, not the details." Family snapshots can often make us *think* we remember details that we have forgotten. But we must understand that the meaning of these snapshots also rides on the wings of wishes. We are often driven toward a wish, toward the ideal, and the paradoxical nature of the photograph—both detailed and vague, both real and indeterminate in meaning—allows us to use it to repossess the past on our own terms.

On the surface, family snapshots show only the opacity of everyday life; their importance lies beyond this surface. What we see in the family photograph album is not the same as what those who are familiar with its contents see. Since the purpose of making family photographs is—like all ritual acts—to enhance reality, the action of making a family photograph, and the subsequent reaction to that photograph, transcend the purely historical and become lodged in memory. What we remember about the past is determined by personal need, and both wishes and imagination charge our memories. Although outwardly a collection of family photographs may seem to show that we have engaged in endless acts of conformity, the many memories that are bonded to each image distinguish the photographed occasions as unique and full of life.

The language of a family photograph album is vernacular, but its dialect is intimate and familial. According to Basil Bernstein, the linguist, there are two general codes of language: the elaborated and the restricted. Elaborated language is the common shared language of a culture, but restricted language is specific to certain subgroups. The apparent content of family photographs is similar from album to album, but the meaning and affect of the syntax in any one album are available only to those who share a knowledge of the connotations implicit in the images. Because family snapshots have deep meaning only for those who have somehow participated in their creation, they defy analysis by outsiders on all but the most superficial levels. One can make fictions from family snapshots, as David Galloway has done in his novel *A Family Album*, or one can anthologize selected snapshots, as the editors of *American Snapshots* have done; but the deep emotional meaning is absent. To examine the family photographs of strangers is to travel into a world which can be only faintly understood, a world of traces.

In his introduction to the *American Snapshots* anthology, Jean Shepherd claims that all family albums exhibit a certain sameness. In fact, the images are made with identical Brownies, Instamatics, SX-70s, and One-Steps; most are processed in the same kinds of machines and are printed in the same sizes; the same photo corners are used everywhere; and so on. The materials used by the family photographer are mass-produced and hence appear common and familiar. Because the subject matter of family snapshots is typical, too, Jean Shepherd can argue that *American Snapshots* contains pure and representative Americana.

> First, it is a touching, true, Common Man History of all of us who grew and lived in America in this century, in addition to being very funny and highly informative. Second, it is a collection that will grow in value, both historically and intrinsically, with each passing year.

Although these snapshots may be true, what truth they express is not clear. Some of the images are indeed touching, but this collection is not something that will grow in historical value over time, unless we understand history to be simply raw material preserved.

Shepherd places value on the world of ap-

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pearances and surface similarity, but the root significance of family snapshots can be grasped only through the exploration of inner worlds. A movie like *Death Wish* makes it clear that snapshots can affect hearts and minds, and that they can do so violently. That movie begins with a husband and wife vacationing at a beach resort. He is taking snapshots of her with a pocket Instamatic. Soon after they return to New York City, the man's wife and daughter suffer a brutal rape and beating, after which the wife dies and the daughter is institutionalized. The husband is impelled to violent revenge only after he looks at the finished snapshots he had taken of his wife during their vacation. The connection between idea and action in *Death Wish* is mediated by personal emotion, and this emotion is evoked by a conventional series of vacation snapshots. It all seems so plausible—and yet the snapshots would not communicate this meaning to a stranger unacquainted with the wife's rape and murder.

Another recent movie has apparently grown from a snapshot. Before the actual filming of *The Deer Hunter* began, the director, Michael Cimino, passed out a snapshot in which five boys stood with "arms around each other, laughing into the camera." According to an interview conducted by Jacoba Atlas, Cimino told his principal actors that "Kodak was what the movie was all about," that *The Deer Hunter* "was about friends who play with one another, fight with one another, live with one another, love one another for twenty-five years." The snapshot shown by Cimino to Robert De Niro, John Cazale, Christopher Walken, and the other actors, "said" virtually nothing in its denotative state, yet its connotations were considerable. Cimino's remarks and the plot of *Death Wish* both suggest that what is implicit in a snapshot is a story.

But what are the stories implicit in family snapshots? How can we know them? Walker Evans once said that when Alfred Stieglitz was making his "equivalents," he "began to think he was photographing God," but, according to Evans, "he was photographing nothing." Evans's sarcasm is obvious, but the meaning of family photographs, like the meaning ascribed by Stieglitz to his "equivalents," is a personal and subjective matter, and it does transcend the everyday. Paradoxical as it may seem, the stories of family snapshots are understandable as convention and are simultaneously unknowable as personal meaning. This was made clear to me while I was examining a nineteenth-century album called *Leaves of Affection*. The album had belonged to a young woman, and consisted of *carte de visite* portraits of her friends under each of which she had asked them to write something for her to remember them by. On September 19, 1861, a friend named Mary Green wrote:

> In complying with your request, my dear young friend, to write in this book, I feel a delicacy, knowing it will be read by strangers who cannot know the affection I have for you and the high esteem with which I regard you.
>
> Nevertheless I will write the sentiments of my heart for I trust the friendship which has commenced between us will never end, for I feel that it is founded on the rock of ages. . . .
>
> *Your Sincere Friend,*
> Mary Green

The words spoken by the Mary Greens of history are disquieting because they contain a truth which those who try to glean information from family photographs find hard to accept: that the stories of most family photographs, like all fairy tales, existed once upon a time but do not exist now. We should take Mary Green's advice, and "feel a delicacy" when we look at family photograph albums. We should feel hesitant about trying to interpret family snapshots in these albums. As traces of the past they are virtually beyond our comprehension, unless, of course, they are our own albums. And even then, our understanding of their images is conditioned by needs and wishes that change as we change. Family photograph albums, and the individual images in those albums, come to mean what we want them to mean—and that meaning is limited only by memory, the root of which is imagination.

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The Kitten

MARY OLIVER

More amazed than anything
I took the perfectly black
stillborn kitten
with the one large eye
in the center of its small forehead
from the house cat's bed
and buried it in a field
behind the house.

I suppose I could have given it
to a museum.
I could have called the local
newspaper.

But instead I took it out into the field
and opened the earth
and put it back,
saying, it was real,
saying, life is infinitely inventive,
saying, what other amazements
lie in the dark seed of the earth, yes,

I think I did right to go out alone
and give it back peacefully, and cover the place
with the reckless blossoms of weeds.

✪ MARY OLIVER's poetry has appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly*, the *Yale Review*, and the *Michigan Quarterly Review*. Her fourth book of poems, *Twelve Moons*, was published last year.

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Accident

PAUL PETRIE

Coming home from the school play,
my grandchildren in back—
streetlights flowing by in gauzy whorls,
the road slick, thin snowflakes drifting down—
suddenly, into the night our headlights wander—
the road wanders off—
and over the countryside we're skimming—
ditches, bushes, hillocks,
trees—
black trunks loom up—
and leap—

From out of the backseat slowly they are lifting
the dangling bodies,
faces painted masks.

Ten stitches in the head, my left arm swathed in snow,
and still they are lifting
out of the backseat the dangling bodies—

Wounds in the mind—
that fingers touch and touch like blindmen's hands,
tracing the ragged edge.

Night after night,

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out of the backseat they are slowly lifting
the dangling bodies—

One moment back—
Wildly we're cheering,
clapping our hands
and cheering—

Sedately the children bow, and smile,
then hand in hand
file through the red curtain that bulges, ripples—
and disappear—

And the lights go on.

✪ PAUL PETRIE teaches in the English department at the University of Rhode Island.

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Books

Spectral Marxism

SIDNEY HOOK

MAIN CURRENTS OF MARXISM: ITS RISE, GROWTH, AND DISSOLUTION: THE FOUNDERS; THE GOLDEN AGE; THE BREAKDOWN. *By Leszek Kolakowski. Translated from the Polish by P. S. Falla. 3 volumes. Oxford University Press. $19.95 each.*

To someone like myself, who was characterized for many years as the foremost Marxist among American philosophers, the resurrection of Marxism and Marxist views in Western thought, particularly in Anglo-American academic circles, has a paradoxical and even amusing side. For it comes at a time when, in the light of the historical record, most of Marx's predictions and expectations have been falsified. What passes for Marxism today is largely a mélange of doctrines that differ from Marx's leading ideas and that he would have scornfully disowned for all their sentimental socialist fervor.

When I completed the manuscript of my *Towards the Understanding of Karl Marx* in the late fall of 1932, the economic depression was at its worst; Hitler was waiting in the wings to take power; and in the thinking of many intellectuals, and in the fears of even more, a socialist revolution seemed to be a live option. That book, which appeared on the fiftieth anniversary of Marx's death, was actually published during the American "bank holiday" in 1933, when capitalism seemed finished even though no one had any idea of what was to replace it. In it I presented a version of Marx that was fundamentally empirical: I did not argue that Marxism was a science, but that it was a scientific method of achieving a socialist society.

Now that we are approaching the hundredth anniversary of Marx's death, the scene is quite different. Capitalism is not on the verge of collapse. In most countries it has developed into a welfare state not anticipated by Marx. The three cardinal doctrines of classical Marxism lie in ruins. The theory of historical materialism—which holds either (in its strong form) that the mode of economic production determines political change or (in its weak form) that it conditions such change—has been refuted by Lenin and Mao Tse-tung. Whether the economy they and their successors built is called "socialism," or "industrial serfdom," or a new form of Asiatic despotism, they succeeded in doing what the theory of historical materialism declared impossible. By seizing political power they built a new economic foundation under it, whereas Marx had anticipated that the economic structure of socialist society would be built within the shell of the old.

Many of Marx's predictions about the development of the capitalist economy have been realized, but those that presumably followed from his theory of value and surplus value have not. Society has not been increasingly polarized between a handful of capitalists and the workers. The working class has not been progressively pauperized; nor has it become the overwhelming majority of the population; nor has there been a decline in the rate of profit. Despite the existence of

SIDNEY HOOK, emeritus professor of philosophy at New York University, is senior research fellow at the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace at Stanford. Among his recent books are *Pragmatism and the Tragic Sense of Life* and *Revolution, Reform and Social Justice.*

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pockets of poverty, the standards of living, as well as the longevity of members of the working class, have risen. In startling contrast to the situation that existed when Marx wrote *Capital,* the life expectancy of members of the middle class and of the proletariat do not markedly differ.

The emergence and persistence of nationalism have revealed the limitations of Marx's conception of the overriding significance and weight of the economic class struggle in understanding historical events. Certainly class antagonisms are always present, and they often erupt into open struggles—a phenomenon discovered by thinkers before Marx. But anyone who still believes that "all history is the history of class struggles" would be baffled to account for the not inconsiderable amount of class cooperation, both in ordinary times and for some great events in times of crisis. The conception of class struggle, for example, can hardly apply to World War II, when democratic capitalist powers allied to a despotic socialist power fought other despotic capitalist powers. Nor can it throw much light on the recent wars between states having socialized economies. Since wars are bred by "classless" socialist societies as well as by class societies, the causes of war cannot be found in what differentiates the two.

How, then, explain the scores of volumes whose authors have accepted the validity of Marx's analyses to a degree that is, in their minds, sufficient to justify their proclaimed allegiance to the Marxist tradition? There is a special explanation in each individual case, but in the present climate of opinion one can sense a pervasive and subtle attitude that facilitates the identification. No longer is there any danger in being known as a Marxist, especially in the elite universities. The label stamps a teacher and scholar as a man of the Left, and therefore sympathetic to the resistance of the counterculture to the establishment, however it is defined. It endears one to the student body, especially to campus organs of opinion that almost invariably are in the hands of young men and women who look back with a wistful envy to the golden and glorious era of the sixties. At the same time that it absolves one from the suspicion of being a vulgar anti-Communist, it lifts the burden of having to defend the *Gulag Archipelago.* The U.S. and the USSR can be damned with a fine impartiality, and if the brunt of criticism falls on the U.S., that is only because the U.S. is where one lives. Some revolutionary wishful thinking may enter into the desire to vindicate either Marx's overall vision or some specific analysis, but there is no doubt about the good faith of these self-denominated Marxists. Some of them even completed reputable works of scholarship before embracing the Marxist ideology—although those who knew their Marx would never call it an ideology.

Regardless of the reasons for the revival of Marxist allegiance, what all expositors and adherents have in common is a conception of Marx that makes his doctrines impervious to empirical confirmation or refutation. None of the recent Marxists—whether in history, politics, economics, psychology, or sociology—meet the criterion of scientific significance formulated a long time ago by Charles S. Peirce, the father of American pragmatism. Peirce insisted that no one could legitimately claim to possess knowledge about the world unless he could indicate what kind of objectively verifiable experience would constitute evidence of a doctrine's inadequacy or invalidity. Peirce did not mean that one should abandon a theory as false immediately on finding a single negative case. He somewhere points out that most tough-minded scientists would hold to a theory in the face of a few falsifying pieces of evidence, but insists that the difference between a scientific truth and a myth is determined by one's knowledge of what counts for and what counts against the specific hypothesis that guides one's inquiry. Despite all the epistemological refinements that show how complex the concepts of meaning and truth are, the acceptance of this criterion is crucial to any doctrine that claims to be scientifically acceptable. And if anything is indisputable in the canons of Marxism, it is the claim of both Marx and Engels that, in contradistinction to the teachings of socialists of other schools, their doctrines were scientifically valid.

In the absence of any conception of the kind of evidence that would make Marx's statements about the economy and history at least refutable in principle, any belief can be attributed to him or be characterized as Marxist. The result is that today when a person characterizes himself as a Marxist, we no

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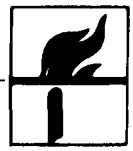

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more know what he really believes than we do when a person claims to be a Christian. Almost at random my eye lights on a long piece in the *New York Times Book Review* in which an academic historian discusses several books on China:

> Among all the great revolutions, the Chinese Revolution of the past hundred years has been, in many ways, the most authentically Marxist. It did not take place in a rich industrial society, but revolutions have never been effected in such a society. However, it is the only revolution that, in line with Marx's prediction, moved to socialize after long periods of capitalism and with a dynamic roughly compatible to the one Marx postulated.

According to this author, the Chinese Marxist revolution must have begun in 1880, when Marx was still alive. How strange that he did not recognize it. It was "authentically Marxist" despite the fact that China was not a highly industrialized society and no revolutions have ever taken place in such a society. But does that not constitute a refutation of the authentically Marxist view that a socialist revolution can occur only in a highly industrialized society? And if China has been a capitalist country for "nearly a thousand years," as the reviewer goes on to say, does it not make nonsense of the very first sentence of Marx's *Capital*, in which capitalism is characterized by "an immense accumulation of commodities"?

One can multiply indefinitely instances of this kind of so-called Marxism. Neither Marx's texts nor the fallout of historical events serves as a sober control over what Marx said or meant. The emotive connotations of key terms have shifted with the times. When I was a student, before and during World War I, the very word "capitalism" was suspect. Only socialists and other subversives used it. The leading representatives of the existing economic order were loath to call the system under which they lived "capitalist." A vestige of that state of mind still survived in Nicholas Murray Butler, who was president of Columbia University when Louis M. Hacker published his *Triumph of American Capitalism*; Butler liked it very much except for the word "capitalism." The attitude toward Marx, not only in the press but in academic circles, was a compound of ignorance and hostility. When I carried my soapbox propaganda into my high school and college classes, to the discomfiture of my teachers, I had the advantage—not that I profited from it—that none of them, with two exceptions (M. R. Cohen and J. Salwyn Schapiro), had ever read anything of Marx firsthand. To them it was enough that the Bolsheviks called themselves Marxists, and the fact that the leading Marxists of the world were bitterly critical of the Bolsheviks was not known. Even when they noted the importance of class struggles, few professional historians concerned themselves with Marx, either on the undergraduate or the graduate level. Economists ignored him. Charles Beard, whose sympathies were always with the underdog and who professed a vague ethical socialism, never understood why those who accepted the Marxist theory of historical materialism rejected his version of it as a narrow and false view of economic self-interest, closer to Bentham than to Marx.

I

The present vogue of Marx studies and the doctrinal stance of Left-oriented intellectuals—"We are all Marxists of a sort these days"—make all the more noteworthy the publication of Leszek Kolakowski's *Main Currents of Marxism*—the first volume of which is devoted to its *Founders*, the second to its *Golden Age*, and the third to its *Breakdown*. The work is an intellectual event of the first order, although the editors of some of our leading organs of opinion have not deigned to notice it. Kolakowski, who was purged for his heresies from the Communist party of Poland and then deprived of his post as professor of philosophy at the University of Warsaw, is currently a fellow at All Souls College, Oxford. He has put all scholars and intelligent laymen interested in Marx and Marxism in his debt. Hereafter no one who undertakes to expound or criticize Marxism can afford to ignore his work. Regardless of qualifications and points of difference (and I have several major ones with him), Kolakowski's magisterial study must be acknowledged as opening a new era in Marxist criticism.

The reasons for this are many. First, it is the most comprehensive treatment of Marx,

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and of thinkers in the Marxist tradition, so far published. Only a few significant figures, close or distant in kinship to Marx and his ideas, have been overlooked. I was surprised to find no account of Henri de Man's profoundly interesting study, *The Psychology of Socialism*, and even more surprised at the inadequate treatment of Waclaw Machajski, who was probably the first to formulate a theory predicting the rise of a new ruling social class under socialism—the intellectuals—that would exercise a new type of exploitation. Yet his omission of Joseph Dietzgen, the proletarian philosopher, seems justified. His simplistic reflections had no influence on subsequent socialist thought. More important, but not surprising because it reflects typical European insularity, is Kolakowski's unawareness of American critical currents of Marxist thought in the thirties that anticipated some European developments a generation later. He is also unaware of Lewis Feuer's original research on the influence of American utopian socialist colonies on Marx.

On the other hand, Kolakowski discusses interesting writers in the Marxist tradition who are unknown to me and, it is safe to surmise, to other scholars ignorant of Polish—for example, Ludwig Krzywicki, Kazimierz Kelles-Krautz, and Stanislaw Brozozowski. Their ideas, however, seem less important than those of his fellow Pole, Oskar Lange, of the University of Chicago. Lange, before he capitulated to the Kremlin (because, as he once told me, "The U.S. is not willing and prepared to fight the Russians on the River Bug"), had characterized the peculiar economy of the Soviet Union as "an industrial serfdom." He argued, together with Abba Lerner, for the feasibility of a democratic market socialism.

In addition to the comprehensiveness of the study—the chapters on Antonio Gramsci, Georg Lukács, and the Frankfurt School are outstanding—Professor Kolakowski manifests a virtue in rare supply among the fiercely polemical contenders for the legacy of Marx. This virtue is his capacity—the secret of his remarkable expository skills—for an empathetic and interpretive presentation of the views that he considers before he dissects them, although it is not in evidence in his treatment of Karl Kautsky. In some cases he is much clearer than the authors themselves. This is true not only for Lukács, with whose interpretation of Marx he is in agreement, but for the different varieties of neo-Kantianism that sought to modify and amplify the Marxist analysis and critique of the historical development of capitalism with a medley of vague ethical notions. One cannot fail to be impressed with Kolakowski's substantive scholarship. He seems at home in all fields: the sciences, philosophy, economics, the organization and strategies of political power. His methodological sophistication and capacity for drawing relevant distinctions help him and the reader to carry the burden of his erudition.

As refreshing as it is unusual in this area is Kolakowski's fair-mindedness. Even when one differs with him, one is aware of his freedom from parti pris, his independent judgment, his desire to recognize the truth from any quarter, and his readiness to challenge established reputations without a show of disrespect. Here is no sectarian at work. Although clearly establishing that the Marxism of Jean Jaurès was seriously flawed, Kolakowski does ample justice to Jaurès's great-souled humanism and his attachment to those universal ethical values that all Marxists themselves invoke—despite difficulty in accounting for their validity from a purely historical point of view. And Kolakowski recognizes the indisputable merits of secondary figures like Paul Lafargue, Marx's son-in-law, regarded by most critics merely as a superb propagandist.

To stop short with the list of its merits, one may note that Kolakowski's book is chock-full of arresting observations. Independent of the thrust of his analysis, these illuminate the men, movements, and events discussed in all three volumes. Almost every page contains a nugget of insight. For example, he explains why Eduard Bernstein, the first great revisionist of Marx, retained as much influence on the German workers as did Kautsky, the warhorse of orthodoxy, with a remark that sums up the situation in Germany, the home of the strongest Social Democratic party in the era of the Second International: "The revolutionary idea was much more the property of the party intellectuals than of the working masses." In one aperçu he exposes the key weakness of Jaurès's attractive social philoso-

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phy: "Like most pantheists he believed in universal salvation, the ultimate reconcilability of all things; i.e., the non-reality of evil." In dispatching the many attempts to dilute the claims of the theory of historical materialism so as to escape the absurd consequences of the monistic version in Marx, the early Engels, Kautsky, and George Plekhanov, he truly observes: "Historical materialism in such watered down terms may provide a contrast to the type of history, such as St. Augustine's, which relates everything to the design of Providence: but it does not constitute a specific method over and beyond what every historian is prepared to recognize."

Despite Marx's contumacious treatment of Moses Hess, Kolakowski observes that Hess was "the first writer to express certain ideas which proved especially important in the history of Marxism." He leaves no doubt that Marx's social ideal provides for the presence of an individuality which, in contrast with societies that call themselves socialist today, "is not diluted into colorless uniformity"—but whose authenticity does not depend on destroying the individuality of others. Regarding persistent efforts to resolve the contradiction between the first and third volumes of *Capital* by interpreting Marx's analysis to apply to "an ideal type of capitalism," he aptly remarks, "Such interpretations protect Marxism against the destructive results of experience only by depriving it of its value as an instrument of real life social analysis."

Of greater originality is Kolakowski's analysis of the concept of "exploitation" in Marx. To the mystification of followers and critics alike, Marx had claimed that it had no ethical significance in his system but that it was the corollary of a fair and legal exchange between the worker and his employer. Kolakowski shows that it can be coherently defined without invoking the doctrine of surplus value from which Marx derived it. He concludes his acute discussion with this observation: "Exploitation consists in the fact that society has no control over the use of the surplus product [which must be present in any society if it is not to dissolve into civil war], and that its distribution is in the hands of those who have an exclusive power of decision as to the use of the means of production." This analysis, if valid, is of momentous importance, for it would follow that, in the absence of democratic processes in determining social distribution, exploitation is possible even in a completely nationalized or socialized economy. Kolakowski's reading conforms with Marx's disavowal of egalitarianism. It implies that only the democratic sharing of the power to distribute the surplus product would end the exploitation of man by man. This is in perfect accord with Marx's commitment to democracy. But it is subject to the charge of utopianism on two counts. First, it assumes that fairness, regardless of the results of distribution, is only a matter of process—as if the democratic process could never result in oppression—and, second, it leaves open a likelihood that Marx seems to have persistently ignored: that there may be other forms of human exploitation which are not reducible to economic terms.

These matters may be regarded by the nonspecialist as peripheral to Marx's contributions. The general reader would probably be more concerned with Kolakowski's assessment of Marx and the Marxist tradition; the extent to which Lenin was a faithful follower of Marx; the relationship between Marxism and the Russian October Revolution of 1917; the roots of Stalinism, if any, in Leninism; and the responsibility of Marxism for Stalinism.

Before these questions are treated, however, something should be said of Kolakowski's contrasting of the Marxism of Marx with the Marxism of Engels. Here he is both original and provocative. Orthodox Marxists, whether Socialist or Communist, have looked askance at persons who, like me, have criticized Engels for his gratuitous introduction of metaphysics and ontology into Marx's scientific world view. Kolakowski believes that the gulf between Marx and Engels is even deeper than anyone has suspected and for the astonishing reason, among others, that Engels was too sympathetic to positivism. This is especially evident in Engels's view that as scientific knowledge develops, philosophy—as a discipline purporting to give verifiable knowledge about nature, society, and man—will disappear, evanescing into the study of logic and the practice of logical analysis. Such a view, although it does not speak much for Engels's consistency, is hardly to his discredit, and there is no evidence whatever that

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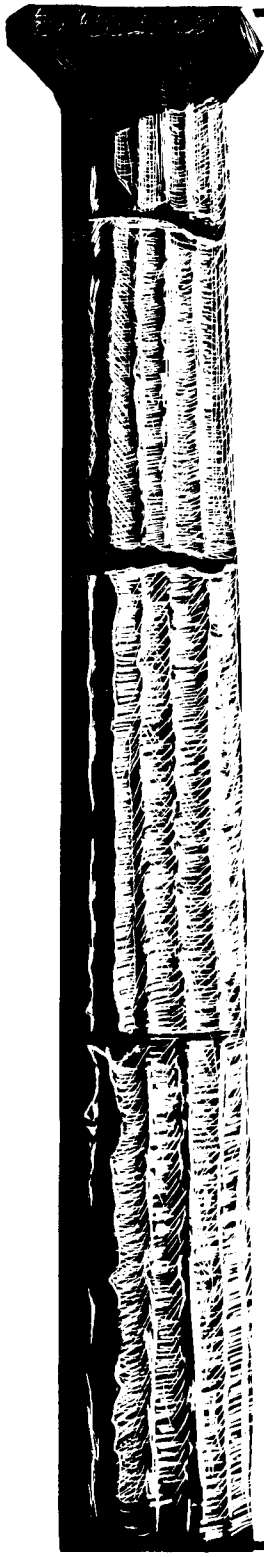

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Marx believed philosophy in the traditional sense would remain an autonomous discipline. Kolakowski is on better ground in recognizing that, while both Marx and Engels are committed to an evolutionary emergent naturalism, Engels's spectator theory of knowledge and its naive correspondence-doctrine of truth cannot do justice to the activity of the human mind in knowing. But when Kolakowski, stating the difference, discusses the meaning of praxis in Marx, he rides a strange hobby horse: "Whereas Engels, broadly speaking, believed that man could be explained in terms of natural history and laws of evolution to which he was subject, and which he was capable of knowing in themselves, Marx's view was that nature, as we know it, is an extension of man, an organ of practical activity."

There is a certain ambiguity in this attribution of anthropomorphism to Marx. If it means only that "knowledge cannot be divested of the fact that it is human, social and historical knowledge," it is a commonplace which Engels certainly acknowledged. Music, literature, art, and religion are also human social and historical products; but what must be explained is that science yields knowledge whose validity transcends the social and historical context in which it is discovered. To go beyond this, to suggest that the very content of knowledge (that is, the truth of what is known) depends upon man, smacks of an idealism that ill comports with Marx's rejection of Hegel. But if Kolakowski means that the human praxis involved in the process of knowing makes a difference to the object of knowledge, then it is a very significant assertion which raises an important question: How it is possible for the mind to be active in knowing and, in virtue of that activity, to introduce changes in the situation under inquiry, and still be capable of achieving valid knowledge intersubjectively? With respect to the social scene, Kolakowski agrees with Lukács's bizarre reading of Marx, that the revolutionary consciousness of the proletariat through its praxis solves the problem—a notion I shall examine later. In passing, I note only that Kolakowski's almost total ignorance of John Dewey's theory of knowledge prevents him from seeing another and more plausible answer to the question.

II

According to Kolakowski, the whole of Marx's thought can be best interpreted in terms of three motifs: the Romantic, the Faustian-Promethean, and the rational, deterministic outlook of the Enlightenment. It is significant that Kolakowski refers to the third motif not as scientific but as "scientistic"—a disparaging term that connotes the inappropriateness of employing scientific methods to some subject matter rather than to false theories about it.

The Romantic motif is expressed in Marx's moral passion for an integrated human being in an organic society. From it flows his criticism of the phenomena of human alienation, and the main features of the Communist Utopia in which the division of labor is abolished, the state and civil society disappear, and the relationships that embrace all members of a loving family extend to all members of society, indeed the whole human race. In view of this idyllic view of the future of man, it is obvious why orthodox Marxists and orthodox Freudians must be at dagger's point with each other.

The Romantic strain is also apparent in the Marxist rejection of the traditional liberal philosophy, as expressed in Locke, Hobbes, Bentham, and Mill, and its justifications of the social contract and human rights. This philosophy, writes Kolakowski, "assumes that human conduct is necessarily governed by selfish motives and that their conflicting interests can only be reconciled by a rational system of laws which safeguards the security of all by limiting the freedom of each. This implies that men are one another's natural enemies, each one's freedom being the natural limit of everyone else's."

What Kolakowski overlooks, as does Marx, is that the philosophy of liberalism implies only that men are *potentially* one another's natural enemies—which is perfectly true and quite compatible with the view that they are *potentially* one another's friends. The considerable number of young men and women during the twentieth century who embraced Marxist communism because they blithely assumed it was an extension of liberalism—Stephen Spender is the classic case—shows that they understood neither liberalism nor Marx's communism.

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Despite the influence of the Romantic ideal, Marx detached himself from it in at least three respects, through savage polemics against those who, he thought, were affected by its rosy glow. First, Marx had no nostalgia for the past; he was oriented exclusively toward the future. Whether or not the future is progressive, it is irreversible. The nostrums peddled by nature enthusiasts, if universalized, would return mankind to the idiocy of village life. Second, his thought was pervaded by the ideals of a secular international community. The spiritual harmonies of religion, the nation, the Volksgeist, or the imagined colorful village life celebrated by the Romantics of his time and previous times, could be idealized in art, but never realized in contemporary life. Third, Marx's attitude toward technology, if not worshipful, was enthusiastic. He lost few nights of sleep, but one of them was a consequence of the feverish intellectual excitement generated by a visit to a scientific technological exhibition in the 1850s. Marx believed, as Kolakowski succinctly puts it, that "the destructive effects of the machine cannot be cured by abolishing machines but only by perfecting them."

Kolakowski does not even mention, however, what seems to me Marx's chief difference with the Romantics. Marx did not believe that man had an original and fixed human nature from which he was necessarily alienated. Kolakowski's whole exposition of Marx is based on the uncritical assumption that Marx adhered from first to last to Ludwig Feuerbach's notion of the species nature of man. This is a fateful misreading, probably due to Kolakowski's own view about the nature of human nature. But the question here is not whether Marx is right or wrong but what he believed. Not only does he explicitly state in *Capital* that all history is a transformation of human nature; it follows from his famous critical gloss on Feuerbach that the human essence consists in the totality of man's social relationships. Since these relationships are historical in character, they change, and human nature, as distinct from its biological basis, changes too. For Marx, human psychology is social psychology. Here too Marx is at one with John Dewey, whose *Human Nature and Conduct* develops the theme in persuasive detail.

The Promethean motif in Marx's thought expresses itself in twofold fashion. An impassioned defiance of all the gods of heaven and earth and a contempt for traditions and institutions that cannot justify themselves by acceptable fruits in experience are preeminently embodied in his faith in human power to control one's social destiny and, within limits, one's natural environment too. This Promethean mood was certainly not unique to Marx. It was shared by other rebels who loathed Marx and he them. But it did not take the shallow form that Kolakowski implies when he imputes to Marx an indifference to the human condition, an obliviousness to the essentially tragic sense of life in the career of finite, fallible creatures against a cosmic background that conditions all that they were, are, and will be. This overlooks the fact that for Marx these features of the world, however irreducible, are irrelevant to a reasoned *social* philosophy. When they enter into human affairs, they function like a religion to distract human beings from concern with remediable evils by agonizing over first and last things. Marx was no philistine. It is unjust to say of a man who was at home with the Greek tragedies, who knew Shakespeare and Dante and Goethe by heart and cited them appositively in his work—a man whose own life was marked by intense grief, the death of loved ones, the anguish of frustrated ambition and personal betrayal—that "Evil and suffering, in his [Marx's] eyes, had no meaning except as instruments of liberation; they were purely social facts, not an essential part of the human condition." What invalidates Marx's vision of the social harmony of the classless society of the future is not death and the facts of human finitude, but his failure to recognize the likelihood of a variety of *social* evils and possibilities for human oppression in a collectivized economy. The inanities of socialist Utopia-mongers, for whom the Revolution is not merely a historical but a cosmic event, should not be laid at Marx's door.

It is not the denial of death or the tragic sense of life that expresses Marx's own Utopianism but, among other things, his absurd view that in a classless society *all* division of labor would be abolished, rather than its inhuman excesses, and his failure to appreciate the Goethean insight that one of the keys to great achievement, except for the Leonardos

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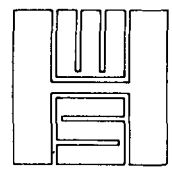

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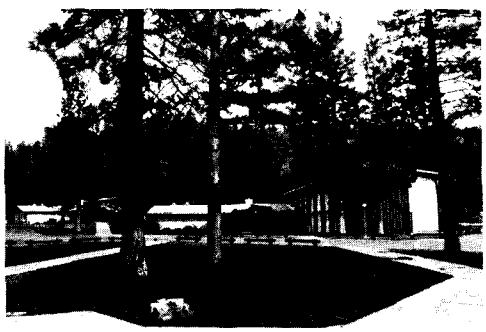

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of this world, is self-limitation. Hegel's theory of alienation was far more profound.

The third motif in Marx is one that Marx himself chiefly stressed: the rational, scientific approach to human affairs. This is apparent in most of the writings that he published when, so to speak, Marx became a Marxist. Kolakowski discounts its significance except for its tendency to breed confusion in the minds of Marx and his followers. The mischief derives from Marx's emphasis upon the presence of laws determining the structure and development of society and from his failure to do justice to the complex and difficult question of reconciling social determinism and human freedom.

Like many other natural scientists of the nineteenth century, Marx used the language of "inevitability" in describing the succession of societies, and particularly the advent of socialism. Yet he could not have meant it literally (any more than by "contradictions" he meant the relation of *logical* incompatibility). For he was no fatalist. His whole lifework was predicated on the assumption that knowledge makes a difference, that the outcome of historical events will be influenced by whether the working class accepts the truths of Marxism and has the courage to act on them. To him the rise of the workers' class *consciousness* is not undetermined, but it is not determined by the same events that give rise to class struggles. The laws that govern capitalist society do not depend upon our knowledge of them, but our knowledge of them may lead to actions that will produce a society in which they no longer operate. Other laws then take over. Just as in scientific medicine we can use our knowledge of biological laws to eliminate plague and other diseases, so we can modify social life to a point in which poverty, prostitution, unemployment, and economic exploitation disappear. Scientific physicians would never assume that when current diseases are eliminated mankind will be free of disease. Many Marxists, however, assume that when current social evils are eliminated there will be no others of any significance. The laws of nature that condition all human effort and the existence of all societies are not affected by our knowledge of them. Marx would have agreed with Spinoza that we can change nature only by natural means. Nor is the validity of social laws, if any, affected by our knowledge of them—only their scope.

Kolakowski disputes this analysis of Marx's scientific motif. He asserts that for Marx the questions of "determinism or human freedom, belief in historical laws or human initiative have no meaning," on the grounds that Marx had overcome the dualism between fact and value, between what is and what ought to be. How Marx did it he leaves completely unclear, despite some obfuscatory pages in which he tries to explicate Lukács's ideas.

As must be apparent, Kolakowski's assessment of Marx is not a conventional one. With respect to almost all the scientific predictions that Marx ever made, Kolakowski concludes that they are false, that at best they have heuristic value in calling attention to the pervasive effects of the underlying economy on the structure of social and cultural life, and the alternatives of action and belief which they frame. What he regards as distinctive to Marx, in contrast to Engels's simplistic scientific naturalism, is a view of human knowledge in which understanding and transforming the world are integral to the process by which the working class acquires the consciousness that leads to socialism. Although he is severely critical of Georg Lukács for his Stalinist allegiance and contemptible personal behavior, he claims that Lukács's indisputable merit is his recognition of this "essential feature of Marxism"—something all the Marxists during Marx's own and later generations failed to see. He seems unaware of how utterly bizarre is the notion that no one truly understood Marx until Lukács wrote.

III

Before evaluating Kolakowski's assessment of Marx, something should be said of his treatment of the post-Marxists to whom two of the three volumes are devoted. Kolakowski rejects the German Social-Democratic tradition, as expressed in Kautsky's interpretation, as unfaithful to the soul of the dialectic revolutionary principle in Marx and as too naive in its reliance on the immanent laws of capitalism and its collapse to bring about a socialist society. He underplays both the intellectual significance of Eduard Bernstein and the vindication of Bernstein's criticisms of

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Marxist orthodoxy by events. Bernstein is the true father of the Bad Godesberg program of present-day German Social Democracy.

In a fascinating chapter that should be prescribed reading for literary intellectuals who have been beguiled by Leon Trotsky's tragic fate and by his rhetorical brilliance, Kolakowski shows that in all essential matters Trotsky's doctrines—and, when he was in power, his practices—were no different from those of Stalin. Trotsky's passion for party democracy arose when he and his followers were victimized by Stalin. It did not extend to the far greater multitudes of non-Communists, innocent of any crimes, who experienced an earlier, if not worse, fate.

Less controversial today—after Solzhenitsyn's searing history of the Gulag Archipelago, which traces its justifications to Lenin—is Kolakowski's analysis of Lenin. It is a clinical annihilation of those who would dispute the evidence that Stalin, despite Lenin's testament urging that he be removed as party secretary, was Lenin's legitimate ideological heir. By judicious citation Kolakowski leads the reader to the inescapable conclusion that "There is absolutely nothing in the worst excesses of the worst years of Stalinism that cannot be justified on Leninist principles if only it can be shown that Soviet power was increased thereby." Still, Kolakowski does recognize some difference between Lenin and Stalin. For one thing, Lenin called his oppressions by their right names, whereas Stalin was a master of mendacity.

This well-fortified conclusion about Lenin's responsibility for creating the system that bred Stalin will bring cold comfort to those in the American radical movement who anticipated that judgment forty years ago. I recall an article by James Burnham in a *Partisan Review* of 1939 in which he declared Stalin to be "Lenin's heir" and which provoked a loud outcry on both sides of the Atlantic. George Orwell, who was by then a confirmed anti-Stalinist, found this bitter truth so unpalatable that he denounced Burnham as "a Fascist" for daring to see in Stalin's deeds the harvest of Lenin's seed. At the time he never used such an epithet to characterize Stalin.

Concerning the much more difficult question of the relationship between Marxism and Leninism, Kolakowski offers an ambiguous and highly qualified answer. On his reading, the Leninist version of socialism in theory and practice is a possible interpretation of Marx, although certainly not the only possible one. But if Leninism is a *legitimate* possible interpretation of Marx, that is indeed a devastating judgment. For what he is really saying is that the historically unprecedented system of totalitarianism which Lenin ushered into the world is implicit in Marx's basic ideas and ideals. But if the conception of a truly democratic socialist society is also implicit in Marx, as Kolakowski acknowledges, then Marx's social and political writings must be considered basically incoherent.

Kolakowski, it seems to me, goes astray here. Although he notes Lenin's lack of fidelity to the Marxist tradition in his early advocacy of an alliance between the working class and the peasantry, and in his exploitation of nationalism as integral to the strategy of the conquest of power, he does not sufficiently stress the chief difference between Marx and Lenin. This is to be found in Lenin's identification of "the dictatorship of the proletariat" (a phrase used twice by Marx to characterize the economic impact of a socialist state) with "the dictatorship of the party," which is literally a dictatorship over the proletariat and everyone else. That identification proved to be the poisoned premise from which all the multiple tyrannies of the Soviet Union flowed—and there is not a line in the enormous corpus of Marx's work that warrants attributing this view to Marx himself. If anything, Marx erred in his emphasis on the spontaneity of the working-class revolutionary movement, affirming and reaffirming that the emancipation of the working class can be achieved only by that class itself. No exegesis of Marx's statement about Communists serving as a "vanguard" of the working class can be used as a source of Lenin's theory of the party. In 1904, before Trotsky became a Leninist, he denounced that theory in words which are uncannily appropriate for the dictatorship of the Politburo and the dictatorship of Stalin. After all, the government of the Paris Commune—to which Marx pointed as illustrating what he meant by "the dictatorship of the proletariat"—was a coalition of many political tendencies in which no party exercised a dictatorship and in which Marx's own political faction was not officially repre-

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sented. Before he died, Marx, like Engels, admitted that the dictatorship of the proletariat could be brought into being through the democratic parliamentary process.

IV

One can say with reasonable confidence that as scholars come to grips with Kolakowski's three massive volumes they will find little to take issue with in more than two thirds of the work: the second and third volumes. It is with Kolakowski's treatment of Marx that major difficulties can be raised, and these involve his assumption that there is no essential difference between the early Marx and the Marx of his major published writings. There are enormous difficulties in this view, which cannot be overcome by pointing out some linguistic continuities between the young and the mature Marx. The crucial question is, When did Marx become a "Marxist"? Until the *Economic and Philosophic* manuscripts were published, the almost universal answer was that he became a Marxist when he promulgated the theory of historical materialism. This doctrine and its corollaries are completely at odds with the Feuerbachian and "true socialist" standpoint of the manuscripts. The whole doctrine of "self-alienation" presupposes logically an essential and perduring self from which man can be alienated—a notion foreign to both Hegel and Marx and, when it was taken over by French socialists, Marx characterized it in the *Communist Manifesto* as "metaphysical rubbish." The question is of more than biographical interest; depending upon how one answers it, Marx will be considered either a muddleheaded philosopher or a pioneering scientific sociologist.

A second major difficulty in Kolakowski's exposition of Marx is his view that the development of the forces of production, or technology in its broad sense, is the driving force of history. "The message of historical materialism would seem to be that a given technology is a sufficient cause of particular relations of production provided certain other conditions of geography or demography are present." Here, it seems to me, Kolakowski's position is very questionable, although other

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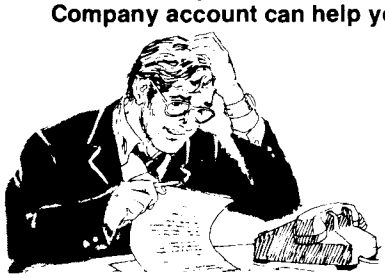

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scholars share it. This view is not only incompatible with Marx's texts, except where he is using metaphors, but runs counter to the central notion of the relations of production and their organic development, in which technology plays a role. Whether a technology is used and how it is used depends upon the state of the relations of production. Once isolated as the basic variable in social change, as Kolakowski understands it, the same technology may be found in two different social systems—that is, systems with different relations of production. In this sense, slaves liberated from slavery can still employ the same technology as freemen, just as in many respects the technology of the U.S. and the USSR today is the same. Here the older Marxist schools were justified in stressing the *mode* or *relations* of economic production as the basis of social organization and development. (It is even reflected in Lenin's odd definition of communism as "Soviets plus electrification," where the term "Soviets" refers in the historic context to a new, collectivist mode of production.) Further, behind every technological development is an idea. It has been argued that the industrial revolution is primarily a scientific revolution. Before long, the technological interpretation of history now put forward to explicate the materialistic interpretation of history is transformed into the traditional idealistic interpretation that Marx explicitly rejected. The obvious retort to this is that ideas, especially when applied, do not develop in a historical vacuum. They are always found in a social context. They are inspired by social needs. Even when they modify, they fit into the net of social relations or the dominant mode of economic production.

The third and most questionable of Kolakowski's positions is his conception of Marx's theory of knowledge. He correctly divines that Marx rejects the contemplative theory of knowledge for a view that makes knowing an activity, a form of practice that must leave the world somewhat altered. But the character of that practice is rather mystifying because of Kolakowski's tendency to identify the activity with revolutionary action—though obviously not all knowledge is related to revolutionary practice. Sometimes he identifies Marx's theory of knowledge with knowledge of social and historical affairs, solving the problem of how we can predict events that we try to influence or bring about. "The act of foreseeing coincides with the act of effecting what is foreseen; the proletariat knows the future in the act of creating it, not after the fashion of a weather forecaster when the changes that actually happen are unaffected by anything the forecaster can do." This is a form of magical idealism. Even in social affairs many events can—in the short run, at least—be foreseen but cannot be effected, certainly not by the proletariat. Considered as a general theory of knowledge, the whole view runs into absurdity in the claim that "cognition signifies taking possession of the world in a process of revolutionary changes"—as if knowing something were like eating it, as if all processes of change were revolutionary, and as if Marx were proclaiming truths about social development that could be valid only for the proletariat.

Another conception of knowledge suggested by Marx's fragmentary comments is ignored by Kolakowski: this view recognizes that an element of activity or praxis enters into every instance of knowledge—from truths of perception to truths about the world, physical or social, outside us. In this view all reliable or tested knowledge involves praxis, not as something practical or useful, but as an activity comparable to what is done in an experiment and one which always involves interaction between the knower and the field he is cognitively exploring. In this sense it entails a rearrangement of the field. We do not learn merely by opening our eyes but by doing, though not all doing is learning. Knowing changes the world in some way, so we may read conclusions that test the anticipated consequences of that change. This does not mean that we change the moon when we learn something about it; it means that to learn something about the moon (or about any other object), we must do something to elements in the field even if we only alter the position of our bodies. Such activity will vary with different disciplines and with different problems, but if knowledge is won, it will be valid independent of who or what class knows it.

This theory of knowledge is embryonic in Marx and is incompatible with Engels's crude view that our ideas are images or copies of things, and therefore objects of knowledge

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that serve as a screen between things and their knowers. The theory is more plausible than Lukács's reading of Marx and, despite its internal difficulties, closer to Marx's naturalistic outlook.

Regardless of the validity of one or another interpretation of Marx, it is clear that Marx's contributions, in whatever modified form, have entered the consciousness of our time, affected the idiom of our language and understanding, and left an ineradicable imprint on the world of scholarship. All this is hardly sufficient to justify anyone's calling himself a Marxist unless he wishes to break out a flag of political allegiance. Just as no scientific biologist, in discussing the genetic aspects of evolution, would call himself a Darwinian today, so no scientific sociologist, if he were concerned only with the truth of his statements, would call himself a Marxist. Even with respect to those scholars who avow Marxism in order to declare their political faith, the spectrum of their beliefs runs from some forms of Leninism to a Third World tribal Maoism. The only thing one can be certain about is their unalterable hostility to the democratic welfare state of the Western world, especially of the United States.

Scholars and Scoundrels

JOSEPH CONRAD: THE THREE LIVES. *By Frederick R. Karl. Farrar, Straus, Giroux. $25.*

Reviewed by PETER CONRAD

Why do all the great biographies of English literary figures—Edel's James, Ellmann's Joyce, Haight's George Eliot, and now Frederick Karl's Conrad—seem to originate in America? The mean-minded English answer would be the subsidized diligence of the American academic. But the truth is that although the English are a nation of biographers, they never produce great biography because for them a life story remains no more than the higher gossip. The purpose of biography in that claustrophobic, incest-ridden

PETER CONRAD is tutor in English at Christ Church, Oxford. His most recent book, *Imagining America*, will be published shortly by Oxford University Press.

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society is to confirm the familial sense of membership, to rig up heraldic pedigrees. In a recent egregious book about Jane Austen, Lord David Cecil confessed as much by saying that, since Jane Austen's life was devoted to her family, it would be churlish of her biographer to ignore the various and irrelevant fates of the siblings and relatives who outlived her. The English biographer is the purveyor of tittle-tattle, not the interpreter of a life. He is one of the publishing scoundrels excoriated in James's *The Aspern Papers,* giving away the family secrets like Nigel Nicolson unveiling the marriage of his parents. English society jealously arms itself against the incursions of American interpreters. The journalistic reception of Leon Edel's new book on Bloomsbury or of the expatriate Martin Green's study of the 1930s scornfully indicated that these men couldn't be taken seriously because they didn't understand the subtle atmosphere of English life—weren't members of the club.

When English biographies are good, they are often ersatz novels. The biographer emphasizes the unrepeatable individuality which makes his subject into an endearing, crotchety character. Boswell's *Johnson* is the prototype. Americans, in dealing with literary lives, place the stresses differently. They treat their subjects not as lovable, irritating family friends but as patients submitted to a psychological investigation; they turn them not into characters but into symbols, exemplary cases. Frederick Karl at once insists that for him Joseph Conrad is a parabolic figure: "Conrad is our representative modern man and artist. An exile, a drifter, a marginal man until well into his thirties, he exemplifies many aspects of the modern sensibility." As Keats said of Shakespeare, the artist's life is an allegory on which his works are a comment. The life is interesting not in itself but as a set of clues enabling us to decode the work. Karl declares this conviction at the very beginning of his book when he comments arrestingly that for Conrad "*The Rescue* was . . . a form of rescue," a protracted recension of his past, an act of salvage. For similar reasons (rather than to justify the epic length of his book) Karl calls his work *Joseph Conrad: The Three Lives.* The allegory which was Conrad's life consists of three distinct, disjunct stages: his Polish youth, his itinerant career at sea, and his later establishment of himself as a writer in England.

The tendency of English literary biography is to belittle the creator by making him a character. How, you wonder, could so lowly and fallible a human creature have also been a great artist? This is true of Johnson's *Lives of the English Poets* and of Boswell's *Johnson.* Shakespeare alone is safe from such affectionate novelistic diminution, because he can never be the subject of a biography. The contrary tendency of American literary biography is a symbolic dehumanization. Karl admits that this has been his aim with Conrad when he quotes Jung's assertion that the artist is "nothing but his work, and not a human being." We never feel, despite the painstaking length of Karl's narrative, that he has fathomed Conrad the man or reduced him to a character, and this is one of his book's virtues. All human beings remain unknowable; the more facts we accumulate about them, the more mysterious they become. Karl's inquiry is exhilarating because uncertain. He is often thrillingly conjectural. Hence his interrogation of Conrad's culpability when a gas lamp explodes and incinerates a manuscript: "Did he feel betrayed? Was the burning of the manuscript attached to the death of a part of himself? Was it even entirely an accident?" The conscious self has been resolved into a plaything of those unconscious compulsions which generate art. In Conrad's family, Karl suggests, "accidents were often events connected to subconscious needs," magical fulfillments of malign wishes.

Not even his physical ailments can suffice to humanize Karl's Conrad. If his accidents are telepathy (as with the burned manuscript), then his illnesses are not maladies of the body but distempers of the creative imagination. Karl is brilliant on Conrad's recurring psychosomatic afflictions, which he diagnoses as "intense forms of depression that occur because of irresolvable inner forces." The artist's demonic power is to make life match the kind of reality he imagines—to invent, as Karl says, "the conditions so that he can be what he has to be." Conrad did so by making himself ill. Inexplicably, perhaps epileptically laid low at the age of nine, he was "curbing his marginality by creating a special set of conditions." Returning from the Congo, he worried himself into a Kafkaesque meta-

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morphosis, so that—swollen, rheumatic, and dyspeptic—"his body was, quite literally, reforming itself, and he was becoming a grotesque." Again, chronic anxiety preceded a visit to Stephen Crane. Where the English biographer might sympathize with Conrad's gout, arthritis, neuralgia, and fevers, Karl enthuses over the symptoms and encourages them, for when the "inner disorder was . . . at its most intense [Conrad] functioned most effectively artistically." He even elliptically refers to influenza as if it were a professional hazard like writer's cramp; beginning work on *Chance*, "Conrad suffered from flu with complications arising from an unfinished novel." Karl does not confine himself to speculation about Conrad's emotional traumas, but even analyzes Conrad's intestinal arrangements, suggesting that his "metabolism must have become reconstituted to take these long days and nights [aboard ship] into account."

For Karl, Conrad is a representative modern artist, not only because he created out of neurosis, shedding his sickness in his books, but because of his alien status, his dubiety about his identity and even about his name. Many great writers of this century have preferred to live in exile, in societies to which they did not belong. Conrad's choice was the most radical of all because he committed himself to the sea, the symbolic medium of alienation and rootlessness. Even after he settled in England, Karl says, Conrad's life remained fragmentary and disintegrative because of his "self-conscious, self-imposed marginality." He is alienated not only from his fellows but from his own dreamily disconnected past; and, like Jung's artist who is not a human being, he is interested in his own life only if it can be made to subserve his art. Thus Karl catches him reconnoitering as friends "characters who would appear in his novels." Conrad wrote not out of direct, garrulous, unmediated experience but out of laborious recollection; "his first major work of length, *Lord Jim*, was almost completely an act of memory." Hence, too, the sea acquires a symbolic meaning in Karl's explication of his subject, for he likens Conrad's gradual expansion of his initial "circumscribed episodes and characters" to the concentric circles which shiver from a stone thrown in a pond:

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"staring at the sea had suggested a method and supplied a structure." For Karl's insecure, alienated Conrad, creation was not an overflowing of excess emotion (as the romantics conceived it) but a more self-mortifying and self-divisive process. The antagonists in *Heart of Darkness* cohabit inside Conrad. Marlow and Kurtz, Karl ventures, embody two of Conrad's three lives: "Marlow represents the rational part, what Conrad had himself become with maturity," while "Kurtz, who had abandoned himself to the jungle, represents the anarchic, chaotic youth."

That Karl's critical readings of the novels are mostly mythopoeic accords neatly with his biographical method. The unconscious motives which rule the man recur in the novels as mythic totems and prohibitions. Just as Conrad's personal existence was energized by the opposition of psychological forces, so the novels dramatize a combat between the discordant myths which Karl labels as Promethean and Orphic: the Promethean hero is a rebellious adventurer, the Orphic hero a narcissistic self-developer.

This is a mighty book; its achievement equals its bulk. Karl's style never slackens over his long haul. He even manages some glints of poetry, likening one of Conrad's image clusters to "a gigantic glacier" or remarking that *The Inheritors* "has no center. It is all angles and glare." *The Three Lives* is not only an outstanding biography but, in its intermittent commentary on the vexed relation between art and life, a notable contribution to the theory of biography.

Kicks

A Book of Soccer. *By Brian Glanville. Oxford University Press. $12.95.*

Reviewed by Heywood Hale Broun

Early in *A Book of Soccer,* Brian Glanville tells us that there was a great nineteenth-century boom in the game because English schoolmasters thought that activity on the playing field was a specific against impure thoughts and nighttime dormitory nastiness. When fourteenth-century Englishmen bloodied noses and barked shins while pushing footballs back and forth between villages, the frustrations released in the conflict—reactions to the aching dullness of muscle-powered agricultural life—were very different from the burgeoning lusts of middle-class boys. But when the bruises began to fade, there was probably the same relatively pleasant exhaustion which comes from the release of tensions. At the World Cup level, the frustrations of whole nations are released, sometimes with a good deal of violence in the stands and surrounding streets, and one wonders how many revolutions have been put off or abandoned in the hysterical glow of goodwill which eleven triumphant men can transmit to the millions they represent.

For many years sports philosophers said that the United States was unique in its approach to ball games, because only here was the *hand* thought of as the primary instrument of control. "Throw a ball to anyone but an American," ran the accepted wisdom, "and he will drop it at his feet and kick it. The American will throw it to a teammate, and if it falls to the ground the play has failed."

For many years in America, soccer was a game played by rejects from football teams and by foreigners. The old feuds of the Austro-Hungarian Empire would be fought out on bumpy Long Island fields while a few hundred spectators would recall or revile Béla Kun or Louis Kossuth. It was pointed out that soccer displeased Americans by being a continuous game, since all the sports we love best—baseball, football, basketball, golf, and tennis—are regularly interrupted, thus giving the spectators a chance to discuss among themselves what they would do if they were in the center of the action instead of at its edge.

Then, too, as a soccer coach once said to me: "The really interesting part of the game of soccer is the organization of the attack at midfield and the shifting defenses which are thrown up to oppose it. To pragmatic, result-minded Americans that just seems like shuffling around. They'll be happy when soccer games end with 15–14 scores after lots of time-outs."

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This wisdom was given me when I was doing a TV news piece about the 1970 national collegiate soccer championships. When we filmed the semifinals there were five hundred people in the University of California grandstand, three hundred of them schoolchildren dragooned into attendance and showing their displeasure by abandoning the game for the delights of the hot dog counter. The teams that went into the final—Long Island University and the University of San Francisco—had not one American-born player in their starting lineups.

Later that year, I covered the World Cup in Mexico. Watching Brazilian and Uruguayan spectators spear each other with national banners, I thought the hysteria made the madness of Michigan–Ohio State look like the reactions of postal chess fans.

Kicking, the basic motive power in soccer, plays a large part in our emotional imagery. Fate is said to deal us "kicks" in various places; we remark that we can't "kick" when things are going relatively well; and when pleased, we get a "kick" out of things. The swinging foot is perceived as a life force, and those who don't use it are said to wear metaphorical signs reading "Kick me!"

Well, the throwing games are still flourishing here, but in the last few years soccer has suddenly taken hold in America and, against all the sociological predictions, is growing fast—perhaps indicating that we as a nation are old enough to be as discontented as the rest of the world, and as much in need of an outlet for our frustrations as those who have been kicking since 2,500 years ago when the Chinese decided to "Tsu," or kick, a "Chu," or leather ball stuffed with feathers.

Now that the game is growing, we are in great need of instruction in its intricacies, since soccer, to the uninitiated, is as formless as the movements of a cloud of water bugs.

Mr. Glanville, a veteran novelist, has a style as supple and sinuous as a sweeper's advance with the ball. Newcomers to the game may wish to skip over his meticulous history of World Cup competition, although a lot of old passions ring through those pages, but their close attention will be repaid in the chapters on the roles of the different positions.

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The game is constantly changing as new defenses must be invented for new attacks, or—as in the case of the notorious Italian "catenaccio" defense, which seemed likely to produce an endless string of 0–0 ties—new attacks devised for new defenses.

If you are among the middle-aged who think they know the game because they ran around in heavy, square-toed shoes in the 5–3–2–1 formations of prewar soccer, you will need this refresher course because today's game no more resembles yours than the lock-ankles-and-push American football of Walter Camp's time resembles the nimble mayhem of today. Indeed, the mayhem aspects of our version of football are causing more and more schools and colleges to shift to soccer, which may be rich in contusion but is rare in crippling injury.

Whatever the reason for the new popularity of soccer in America—whether it is really some deep change in the national psyche or just the realization that the rest of the world has been enjoying something we've missed—a literature is obviously needed and *A Book of Soccer* is an important entry for that new shelf.

High Stakes Loser

POMPEY: A POLITICAL BIOGRAPHY. *By Robin Seager. University of California Press. $25.*

Reviewed by G. W. BOWERSOCK

In the turbulent decades that led to the end of the Roman republic, Pompey the Great combined service to the state with self-advancement so skillfully that it fell to him to contest, in civil war, the supremacy of Julius Caesar. We shall never know what Pompey's ultimate aspirations for power actually were. We shall never be able to determine whether he intended to work within the system, however much he bent it, or whether he intended to destroy it. For he lost in the struggle with Caesar and, despite all his achievements, is best known to the world as a loser. Since Caesar's success proved in time to lead directly to the dissolution of the republic, Pompey has enjoyed, in some quarters, a posthumous reputation for loyal republicanism, for high principles cruelly thwarted. It is often instructive to observe the occasions when Pompey's career has aroused particular interest among modern historians. The two most important treatments of Pompey in the present century were both written in German: Eduard Meyer's *Caesars Monarchie und das Principat des Pompeius* and Matthias Gelzer's biography, *Pompeius*. The first work was completed in 1918 and the latter in 1944.

Obviously both Meyer and Gelzer saw in their subject some kind of pertinence to the events of their own day, and that pertinence imparted an intensity and perspective which served to elevate what they were doing above the level of scholarly exercise. Meyer explicitly commented on Pompey's career and its calamitous end as possessing not only historical interest ("nicht nur ein historisches Interesse") but instruction for the present and the future ("lehrreich auch für Gegenwart und Zukunft"). He thought particularly that the United States ("die grosse Republik Nordamerikas") had a great deal to learn about the effect of its military power and its influence abroad on the constitutional system at home. Gelzer, a more modest and less passionate man than Meyer, recorded in the preface to his biography that, after having agreed to compose the life of an eminent Roman, he chose Pompey because there were plenty of sources (which is certainly correct). But he took pains to conclude his preface by dissociating himself from Meyer's highly favorable portrait of Pompey.

It is perhaps too soon to tell why, after several decades, two new studies of Pompey have suddenly appeared. One, by J. Leach, was published in 1978, and the other, the book under review, in 1979. Between Gelzer and these new books there had been only one major work devoted to Pompey, and that was essentially a compilation (in French) of testimony from the ancient sources. It looks, however, as if the present interest is due more to the traditional scholarly desire to fill "gaps in the literature" than to any really profound sense of Pompey's importance. Seager says as much in his preface: "Books on Caesar and Cicero abound. Even Crassus has now

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attracted two biographers in quick succession. Yet there has been no life in English of Pompey the Great. . . . Scholars and students have had at their disposal only foreign works. . . . Therefore a book in English on Pompeius should need no justification." Yet in this age of the overproduction of academic monographs, Seager's declaration is not very satisfying. Gelzer's biography is a much more mature work, better balanced and more subtle. As Seager indicates by his title, he has been concerned exclusively with Pompey's political career, whereas Gelzer tries to assess the whole man. Seager's book begins with some dense pages about Pompey's father and the Social War, whereas Gelzer leads the reader into the problems of the late republic through a brilliant introductory sketch. Since Seager has already published translations of some of Gelzer's seminal work on the Roman nobility, the needs of English-speaking readers might have been better served had he chosen to translate Gelzer's *Pompeius* rather than to write a new biography of his own.

But Seager's book is a very respectable performance. It is accurate, intelligent, and concise. Even so, the emphasis on politics grows tiresome, and one eventually forms the impression that Seager has really nothing to say about Pompey beyond telling us again what the evidence says. He shows admirable discretion in handling the familiar puzzles of late republican history (Pompey's imperium against the pirates, Pompey's imperium against Mithridates, whether Crassus went to Luca, the terminal date of Caesar's Gallic command, and so on), but his book lacks the conviction of an author who really cares about his subject. Unfortunately this is often what happens when a book is written to fill a gap in the literature. Seager's *Pompey* reminds one of tutorial essays assigned to a very able student. Even the hackneyed language of that depressing genre of academic prose occasionally defiles the professional competence which marks the book as a whole. We meet a "hatchetman" on page 17 and a "henchman" on pages 19 and 66. When the sources leave us in the dark as to what somebody, usually Pompey, was doing, we learn that the person had decided "to await developments," "to wait in patience," or "to bide his time."

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Wedges are driven in on pages 75 and 107, and cudgels are taken up on pages 20 and 106.

The most interesting new work on the late republic does not seem to have had much of an impact on Seager. Christian Meier's *Res Publica Amissa*, published in 1966 and arguably the most important analysis of the period since Syme's *Roman Revolution*, has had regrettably little influence on historians in the English-speaking countries. Meier's approach to republican politics relies upon concepts that are alien to traditional classical scholarship, and his German prose is uncommonly difficult to read; but he has succeeded, as no one else has, in making sense of political behavior that resists the now familiar methods of prosopography. Seager has demonstrated long since that he knows German well. So it is all the more surprising that he has no more responded to the challenge of Meier's work, duly listed in his bibliography, than have most other historians writing in English—with the signal exceptions of E. Badian and Shackleton Bailey. At this late date it simply will not do to say that Rutilius Lupus, a Pompeian at one time, was at another time "taking pains to disguise his role as Pompeius' agent." Nor can one accept an interpretation of the consular elections of 53 B.C. in terms such as these: "Bribery reached unprecedented levels as the candidates made alliances that cut across their previous and present associations." Meier's analysis, with or without his concept of "political anthropology," would have enabled Seager to offer a less naive account of the conduct of Roman politicians, especially in the confusing and unstable period from 56 to 49 B.C.

Sometimes Seager has fallen victim to the prosopographical excesses of other historians who have, unlike Syme, allowed the delights of a speculative hypothesis to obscure the realities of political life. In his treatment of Rullus's proposal for land distribution in 63 B.C., Seager has taken over the argument of G. V. Sumner that Rullus represented Pompeian supporters who were planning covertly for the settlement of the great general's veterans. Yet Cicero managed to kill the bill by suggesting powerfully that Pompey's enemies were behind it. Seager is accordingly reduced to speculating that what began as a pro-Pompeian measure was taken up by hostile forces, presumably Crassus and Caesar. Yet Cicero gives no hint that a friendly effort was being subverted. He does make it plain that the Rullan bill was designed to block Pompey; that is why he opposes it, and that is why it is dropped. It would be difficult to believe that Sumner and Seager knew who was really behind Rullus when Cicero did not, and it would be even more difficult to believe that if Cicero did know, he thought he could please Pompey by getting the bill defeated through utterly misrepresenting it. If it was a bill in Pompey's interest, Cicero would scarcely have undertaken to kill it in the name of Pompey. Cicero was not so devious as that.

Seager is similarly oversubtle when he comes to the famous phrase that Cicero used in writing to Pompey in April of the year 62: old enemies have become new friends (*veteres hostis, novos amicos*). This time Seager accepts an argument from Erich Gruen that by these words Cicero did not mean Caesar, or Caesar and Crassus, as has generally been thought, but instead an amorphous group of dispossessed and discontented citizens. It is a pity that Seager was apparently unable to make use of Shackleton Bailey's commentary on Cicero's letters *ad familiares* (published in 1977), for he would have found there an acute discussion of Cicero's remark. If Cicero thought that Caesar and Crassus were working against Pompey in the previous year through the launching of the Rullan bill, then in 62 Caesar and Crassus were old enemies as far as Cicero was concerned. As Shackleton Bailey observed: "Cicero is the writer of this letter. . . . It is hard to believe that Cicero did not have either or both of these two prominent persons, neither of them friendly to himself, in mind." The trouble with subtle and unsupported interpretations is precisely that they tend to become the basis for further subtle and unsupported interpretations.

In other matters that do not readily lend themselves to political schematization, Seager is dismissive. There was and still is a great opportunity for a historian to say something illuminating about the prosecution of Rabirius in 63 according to an archaic procedure prescribed for what Seager rightly calls "the obsolete offence of *perduellio*." This mysterious event in a famous year mobilized

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a substantial number of eminent men: L. Valerius Flaccus, C. and L. Julius Caesar, T. Labienus, Metellus Celer, and Cicero himself. A red flag was displayed on the Janiculum. Even if the whole operation seems bizarre to us, it is obvious that all these men would not have bestirred themselves as they did without taking the issue seriously. It is not the part of a historian simply to say of this incident, "Next politics moved into the realm of farce," or to describe it as "this ludicrous episode." It does indeed look ludicrous to us, but so do many historical (and contemporary) events of considerable significance. The Romans did take the case seriously, and it is the historian's job to ask why. With the equally bizarre situation in 59, when Caesar's consular colleague, Bibulus, gazed at the heavens, Seager understands better the meaning of this archaic practice in terms of the politics of the time. As he says, it has "the effect of rendering all the rest of Caesar's legislation technically invalid." It is clear that the Romans took this problem seriously because in the following year Clodius went to the trouble of formally banning Bibulus's tactics for the future and thereby underscoring, as Seager realizes, that these had had force in the previous year.

Ultimately what one looks for in a biography is some kind of coherent presentation of a single personality. Biographies that fail to do this are subject to the complaint recently leveled against a biography of Crassus—that the work is simply a survey of political history (or some other kind of history) with particular attention to the role of one figure. In the field of ancient history, biographies of this kind have proliferated and tended to bring the whole genre into disrepute: "genre actuellement discrédité à tort sans doute, dans notre milieu universitaire," Paul Petit wrote recently in *Revue des études grecques*. It is otiose to argue whether biography is or is not history. Certainly a good biography can enhance our understanding of history, but it does this through the persuasive evocation of a real human being.

Seager's book is more a survey of political history than the revelation of a man. Like Meyer, Seager believes Pompey did not want to destroy the republic. Caesar, he says, "did

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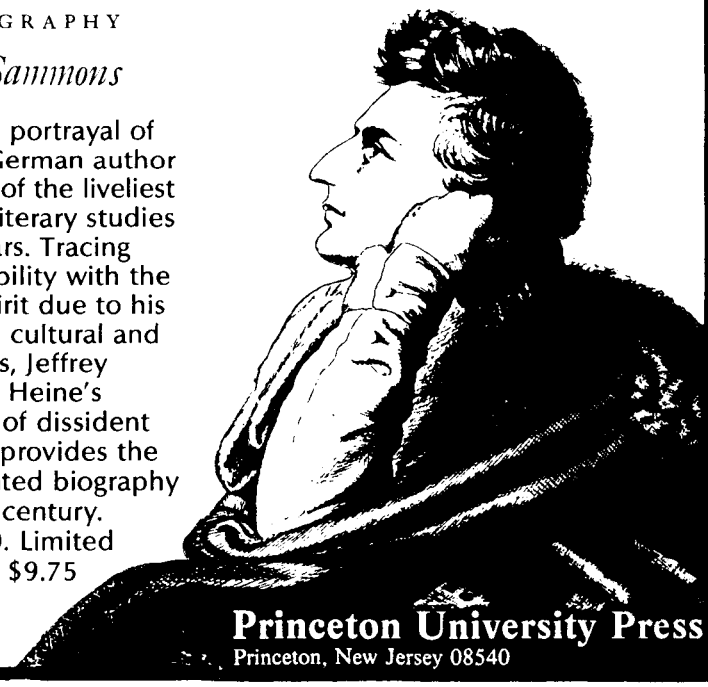
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destroy it." We are asked to envision a man who wanted only to be the leading citizen, the savior to whom senate and people turned in a crisis. Yet Seager never really confronts the inconsistency of holding this view while recognizing, as he does, that Pompey's whole career turned on a series of violations of the republican system of Rome. Pompey broke one rule after another. He triumphed twice while an equestrian; he entered the senate by becoming consul; he was a *privatus* with extraordinary commands in the East; he governed a province on a five-year term and never went there; he held the consulate without a colleague. Is this a man who wants to work within the system? Like Augustus, who learned much from Pompey after gaining his opportunity from Caesar's death, Pompey tried to keep others within the system while he worked outside it. Tacitus quite correctly saw a direct line from Sulla through Pompey to Augustus. Pompey would never have made Sulla's mistake of becoming dictator, as Caesar did. Pompey operated more obliquely. He was capable of hypocrisy, as Seager acknowledges, but he made his own mistakes too. In late May of 51, Caelius wrote to Cicero with a characterization of Pompey as trenchant as any made by an eyewitness: "solet aliud sentire et loqui neque tantum valere ingenio ut non appareat quid cupiat." This has been elegantly translated by Shackleton Bailey: "He is apt to say one thing and think another, but is not clever enough to keep his real aims from showing."

In the Cage

BLOOMSBURY: A HOUSE OF LIONS. *By Leon Edel. Lippincott. $12.95.*

Reviewed by SONYA RUDIKOFF

"What a set!" Matthew Arnold once remarked about the Shelley circle. But his phrase could also serve as a comment on the style of countless intellectual circles flourishing in European and American cities during the past hundred and fifty years. Bloomsbury, like all such groups, exhibited a seemingly boundless innovation, brilliance, and enthusiasm, an arrogance and intimacy, an innocence and destructiveness, and a defiance of propriety. The name Bloomsbury designates an old and somewhat shabby district in London made up largely of bookstores, the British Museum, squares outlined by Adam façades, the University of London, architectural offices, bed-and-breakfast places in Georgian houses, big hotels, gardens, and now the Post Office Tower looming above it. The group of intellectuals and artists took its name from the district because its original members lived there, but of course the name stayed with them even when only one of them was left in Bloomsbury. It was not the most colorful or extravagant or the most extreme group of its kind in the London of those Edwardian and Georgian years—Arnold's phrase might fit some others better—but nevertheless Bloomsbury has developed into an attractive and abundantly documented subject in modern literary history.

For Leon Edel, in his new book about the group, the subject proposed itself in the form of "nine characters in search of an author"; the title came to him from Virginia Woolf's comparison of her friends in Gordon Square with the lions at the zoo: "One goes from cage to cage. All the animals are dangerous, rather suspicious of each other, and full of fascination and mystery." How did the group begin? In 1905 the four children of Leslie Stephen, after his death, took up the suggestion of their older half brothers and moved out of the old Kensington house to set up their own household in Bloomsbury. The brother down from Cambridge brought some friends around. The friends brought other friends. The two sisters were interested in the young men from Cambridge. Someone's cousin appeared, and some sisters of another young man. There were no parents, no older people; they were all on their own. That was how Bloomsbury began. As it happened, the young men had certain intellectual and career interests, and so did the young women. Professor Edel's book takes their story up to the point where they began to be established in their careers as writers, editors, painters, academics, civil servants.

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The "Bloomsberries," as they sometimes called themselves, had many "unconventional" parties in their Georgian sitting rooms—which they decorated in bright colors and chintz, not the old dark wood and plush of their childhood homes. They were agnostics or atheists; they did not dress for dinner; they often became attached to members of their own sex as well as to those of the opposite sex; they were socialists; they believed in frankness; they associated themselves with new thought, with the new art in Europe, with new ideas of design and of social life; they believed that the old Victorian world was finished. Still, they had houses, dinner parties, servants, incomes. In some ways their Bloomsbury lives were just a shabbier and more disorganized version of their lives in Kensington or Belgravia or Lancaster Gate. They tweaked Victoria's nose but didn't risk too much by it. Despite an atmosphere of iconoclasm, their free speech did not mean the liberal use of obscenities but rather only a disloyal, spiteful frankness about each other. Still, "our set," as Virginia Woolf called it, stayed together through more than thirty years. Definitions of Bloomsbury's "ideas" were undertaken early, with absurd seriousness. Did they stand for art, or love, or personal relations, or innovation, or none of these things? In the thirties, their lack of program was taken as a proof of frivolity. At first they were puzzled by the definition of themselves, but then, after the First World War, they joined in the game, defining "Old Bloomsbury." And soon they were occupied with lists of their friends, in the same way that, much later, some people would spend time defining "*Partisan Review* intellectuals" or listing those present at the West End Bar or the City Lights Bookshop. Just because nothing specific seemed to unite the members of Bloomsbury, most of the definitions sounded foolish or pompous.

Bloomsbury had no leading hostess or luminary, no specific gathering place such as a café, and after 1917 most of them lived elsewhere. In the London life where they flourished, however, they could seem to be significant to the life of the nation, to have a natural access to the crucial theaters and pulpits of its intellectual and cultural life, and

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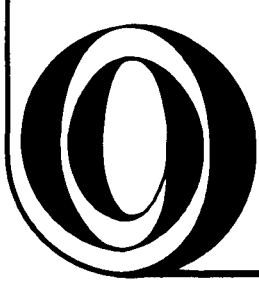

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were accordingly resented by those who did not. Without explicit commitment to any specific beliefs, except what they shared as young people of that time, they nevertheless held certain attitudes in common, although the umbrella under which they gathered did not shield them all. Of the nine characters united in this book, two were not especially enhanced by the Bloomsbury connection—Maynard Keynes, a universally acknowledged major economist, and Virginia Woolf, a major writer and feminist. In fact, it was irrelevant to Keynes, who was much more involved in Cambridge, in Whitehall, and in world capitals, and it was harmful to Virginia Woolf, for whom the Bloomsbury label perhaps demeaned or diminished the serious attention she wanted. Of the others, Roger Fry and Clive Bell certainly represented Bloomsbury's hospitality to new art, but they are not now consulted for their aesthetic theory. Fry himself was also a methodical and conscientious painter whose work demonstrated the skills of an educated diplomatist of art—translating Cézanne, Bonnard, and Matisse into the language of Sussex. Clive Bell is more interesting as a character than as a writer. One of Professor Edel's most accomplished portraits in the book, "The Hunter's Eye," is of Bell as a young man of the country and of the county, a young Tolstoyan hero with powerful gifts, instincts, and passion, whose natural acuity was trained and sophisticated into the perceptive skill of the connoisseur. Desmond MacCarthy was also typically Bloomsbury, interesting as a character in some fiction of the charming young man, the cosmopolitan Englishman—Eton, Trinity, then London, then the ambulance corps in France, which haunted him ever after. MacCarthy must have been a friend to cherish, and a marvelous companion, but, despite Professor Edel's effort to re-create him, he does not live in these pages as he must have done for his friends. As the young people say nowadays, you had to have been there.

It is hard to tell how much attention Lytton Strachey would receive now without the sustenance of Bloomsbury. He practiced on Virginia Woolf a kind of intellectual terrorism, to which she remained always vulnerable, as witness all her letters to and about him. *Eminent Victorians* was a succès fou, so he carried the burden of Bloomsbury's arrogance and its imputations of snobbery, and was of course damaged by these. He comes across very precisely in his own work and in the innumerable reports about him, but there is a question whether *Eminent Victorians* bears rereading, and his other books, also great successes, do not really live up to their promise. Strachey's cousin, Duncan Grant, was to be the friend and lover in Bloomsbury—and the lone survivor, dying in 1979 at ninety-three. Vanessa Bell, to whom he was attached for so many years, also lived a long life, dying at eighty-two. As the painters of Bloomsbury they often stood apart from its brilliance and sociability: they lived in the country, they were not verbal performers or intellectuals, and Vanessa was "monolithic," as everyone said—silent, observant, remote, mutely signifying, in the manner of that African sculpture so meaningful to the avant-garde in the early 1900s. She and Duncan were both involved in Roger Fry's Omega Workshops, a remarkable design group which attempted to manufacture and distribute objects of the modern aesthetic. A casualty of the First World War, and of conditions then prevailing in the furniture and design industries, Omega Workshops was nevertheless of great interest, linking Ruskin, Morris, and the modern movement.

Vanessa was unfulfilled and unrealized as a painter, although as a sister, mother, lover, and friend she was resourceful, devoted, and steadfast. In some ways the center of Bloomsbury life (and Professor Edel uses a photograph of her sculptured head as his frontispiece), she was also one of its victims, whose accomplishments never matched her gifts. She and Duncan Grant worked together on projects of interior decoration—notably their most sustained project: the painted walls, fireplaces, mantels, furniture, and objects at Charleston Farm, in Sussex, where they lived from 1917 until the end of their lives. This house, which now stands in need of extensive restoration before everything fades and crumbles, is a monument to their shared aesthetic inspiration. Vanessa's own gifts were for more abstract work, as is evident in her paintings at the Tate and Courtauld galleries and in her remarkable designs for her sister's books. Vanessa's work seems more serious than Dun-

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can's often fanciful, surrealist, and modern mannerist style, but in the context of their relationship she seems to have ceded her vision.

Her brother-in-law, Leonard Woolf, was not so much unrealized as unrecognized. His role as Virginia Woolf's husband, companion, editor, nurse, mentor, and occasionally caretaker is well known, as is his important role in the history of Bloomsbury and his inspired creation of the Hogarth Press, whose business he conducted throughout his long life (he died in 1969 at eighty-nine). What is less widely known is his very significant and invisible advisory role in British political history, especially in Fabian and Labour Party circles, and in the intellectual background of the League of Nations. Leonard's meticulous, not to say obsessional, record keeping, his scientific notes and observations on the stages in Virginia's madness, his highly rationalistic conduct of his and their life—all this is familiar. Leonard's decency, righteousness, uncompromising standards, the methodical self known to readers of his five-volume autobiography might even obscure and distort the image of the young man Virginia first knew—the Cambridge friend of her brother's, the passionate, intense young man seeking power, romance, and meaning. Professor Edel's early chapters on the young Leonard Woolf and his friends are among the best in his book. Elsewhere, perhaps, he may strive too much for symmetry and analogy, but in the opening scenes he evokes the young manhood of Leonard in a poignant way. Interestingly, he begins the whole story in Bloomsbury itself, where Leonard's grandfather, Benjamin, the prosperous tailor, settled in a comfortable house near Tavistock Square. This story of Leonard's early life in the Victorian world of the gaslit nursery, of the young Jew at St. Paul's and Trinity College, Cambridge, is called "Thoroughly," after the motto adopted by Leonard's father, the ambitious barrister and Q.C., and so appropriate for Leonard himself.

Was Leonard Woolf one of the lions of Bloomsbury, or was he outside the cages looking in? In 1963, for the third volume of his autobiography, he used as an epigraph the lines from Rilke's poem about the panther whose gaze has grown so weary from looking

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through the bars of his cage, as if behind the bars there were no world. It was a text which haunted Leonard, pondering the First World War, especially because another terrible thought came to him:

> There are other bars, permanent bars of the cage of one's life, through which one has always and will always gaze at the world. The bars of one's birth and family and ancestors, of one's school and college, of one's own secret and sinuous psychology. Has not my mind, my soul, if I have a soul, for the last 82 years been pacing up and down like the panther, backwards and forwards, behind these bars and gazing through them until, so weary, I have seen, not the world or life, but only the bars—a thousand bars and behind the bars no world?

What Leonard touched on here provides a clue to the entire question of Bloomsbury, but it has hardly been taken up except in belligerence or defensiveness. For decades Bloomsbury was denounced as a circle of the privileged, remote from real life, as a sanctuary of snobs, an excrescence of late capitalist society. The group has been just as vigorously defended for its conjunction of brilliance, wit, social innovation, openness to experience, aesthetic experiment—for supremely representing the best of civilized life. The quarrel with Bloomsbury as an instance of high culture, even the dispute about whether or not Bloomsbury did represent high culture, was a quarrel that some critics, like the Leavises and the Leavisites, were to pursue even unto the third generation.

The polemical discussion of Bloomsbury is thus a way of once again attacking the incredibly durable British class system, an exercise which has no counterpart in this country and, in a sense, no relevance. Some of the contemporary fascination with Bloomsbury may express either an unearned nostalgia for an earlier, simpler social system or, quite as much, an unwarranted indifference to the kind of social processes which nourished Bloomsbury—its families; its incomes; its nurseries, schools, universities, clubs; its Apostles, Memoir Club, Friday Club, 1917 Club; its group of friends from a stairway at Trinity; its friends of friends. The bars of the cage of life that Leonard Woolf points to were not, however, only the bars of the cage of his own life. After so many years of ancient and recent history, after universal suffrage, death duties, income tax, the end of empire, the 1944 Education Act, and other transformations, the mind may still be pacing up and down, weary with gazing through bars. For three or four hundred years England has been a society of immense social mobility and innovation, constantly transforming and renewing its culture, and the kind of advancement which education and socialization made possible is supremely evident in the career of Leonard Woolf himself. That old world is gone now, though. Anyone who goes about in London, or turns on the BBC, or listens to the tone of public life can see that not only has the society which ambiguously nourished Bloomsbury vanished, but that its disappearance does not really comfort those who opposed Bloomsbury. Vast changes have swept beyond all the antagonists, while entirely new issues have developed, as well as new social groups whose desires and expressions could not have been imagined in the world now lost. Could that be what wearied Leonard Woolf's ancient gaze?

Professor Edel has made generous use of Bloomsbury sources and archives, deftly weaving together material from numerous memoirs, biographies, journals, novels, and other reports. It was quite a prodigious feat to orchestrate the lives and careers of this group, even only until their middle age, but individual aspects of it are not entirely successful. I think particularly that the effort to treat the group as a group has made all the individual careers seem more frivolous than they were: Professor Edel's dexterity somehow smooths and polishes their bleakness, their harshness, their unhappiness. Symmetry, analogy, and the imperatives of biographical theory have perhaps given a wrong accent, an unsatisfactory emphasis, to some of the relationships—for example, that of Virginia Woolf and Vanessa Bell—at the expense of other psychological forces which may have been less manageable in the design of this book. And the neglect of that other subject, of what wearied the panther's gaze, can leave the reader still saying about Bloomsbury, "What a set!" when there should be more to say.

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The Reader Replies

Nuclear Research

It's disconcerting to find Jeremy Bernstein, a member of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR's editorial board, suggesting that the reasoning used to ban TRIGA "could be used to ban any controversial academic subject at Columbia" (Winter 1979/80). As a former member of that university's community, I found the question of allowing a nuclear reactor to be operated in my basement far from academic. It remains a political issue, controversial because of its immediate consequences.

I don't believe I could share Dr. Bernstein's evident delight with the "pleasant incandescent blue" of a TRIGA reactor in operation. And I have less of a desire to witness that "brief flash in the swimming pool and then nothing," should something go wrong.

For me, Dr. Bernstein's borrowed analogy is extended by the possibility that the "pet cat" in question may some day mature into an adult tiger. While we are figuring out a way to bag the man-eater, we might insist upon a leash for kitty and advise the other villagers to refrain from bringing any more stray pussycats into our midst.

ALLAN HORING
New York, New York

JEREMY BERNSTEIN replies: Judging from his letter—I do not know the gentleman—Mr. Horing belongs to that class of individuals in whom the words "nuclear" and "reactor," when taken conjointly, produce an allergic reaction that precludes further rational communication. Such people cannot—or will not—understand the distinction beween a tiny research reactor that dissipates power at the rate of a large household appliance and a huge commercial power reactor such as the one at Three Mile Island. The latter raises questions of safety that are the proper concern of all of us. For over two decades TRIGA research reactors—the subject of my piece—have been operating in the "basements" of universities and hospitals in this country and elsewhere. To my knowledge there has never been in anyone's mind a question as to their safety with the one exception of the community that Mr. Horing seems pleased to have been a member of.

Orientalism and the Scandals of Scholarship

THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR recently published a review (Autumn 1979) of Edward W. Said's book, *Orientalism*. I was sufficiently intrigued to get the book and read it. To my astonishment, I came across my name in the book. The reference was so blatantly indefensible that I was moved to write a letter to Professor Said asking him what justification there was for his charge.

The particulars in this case are not world-shaking. What gives it some interest is its bearing on the ethics with which Professor Said conducts his political and intellectual vendettas. The facts are as follows, as stated in my letter to him:

> I have just found my name stuck away in one of your footnotes in the book *Orientalism*. It occurs in Note 137 on page 349. The reference is to a statement on page 310 in which you write about "a Morroe Berger presuming that since the Arabic language is much given to rhetoric Arabs are consequently incapable of true thought." The footnote associates me with Berger's presumption—"it is there more subtly in political and historical scholars such as Theodore Draper, Walter Laqueur and Elie Kedourie."
>
> I can understand that you might not like or agree with what I have written on the Arab-Israeli conflict. But your footnote makes a particular point—that in some subtle fashion I have ever stated or implied that Arabs are incapable of true thought because the Arab language is much given to rhetoric.
>
> I ask you: Where did you find any such thing, subtly or not, in anything I have written? Where or what is the evidence for the idea that you attribute to me?
>
> Since you are such a stickler for exactitude and fairness, I think you owe me an explanation. I await your answer with the greatest interest.

After more than a month, I am still waiting. I make this matter public because his baseless reference to me was made publicly in his book to which I have no other means of replying.

Curiously, the only reference I have ever made to Arab "rhetoric" was intended to counter the idea that Professor Said attributes to me. I cited *Arabic* sources on Arab "irrationality" and Arabic imperviousness to Western understanding. After some discussion of the issue, not at all in the way Professor Said charges, I concluded:

> Certainly, both Israelis and Westerners would have been better advised and more nearly forewarned if they

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had taken Arab public proclamations and declarations quite literally since at least 1971. Too many Westerners treat the Arabs as if they were irresponsible, irrational, petulant children who go into a tantrum every time they do not get what they want. Even if some Arabs do invite it, this Western attitude does no one any good, least of all the Arabs whom it encourages to indulge in irresponsible histrionics (*Commentary*, December 1973, p. 40).

Can this view be construed to mean that I believe that Arabs are "incapable of true thought"? Professor Said's line of attack is so farfetched that I can only believe its sole purpose was to put me on some sort of political blacklist. I see no other way to account for the apparent lack of rational thought in Professor Said's polemical technique.

THEODORE DRAPER
Princeton, New Jersey

A Man of Letters

How happy I am to find that Aristides, too, is a mail addict (Autumn 1979). I have been one since boyhood, when I used to wait eagerly for the arrival of a book on how to become a railway mail clerk or the latest stamp approval sheet from the New England Stamp Company.

I am not only an always hopeful receiver of mail but an obsessive sender of mail. For some years I was editor, and later publisher, of a business weekly. I took advantage of my position to write a weekly column where often and without shame I used to prod at the beliefs of my readers in order to generate hate mail. I was equally shameless in writing the kind of columns that aroused hearty cries of approval. My greatest feat was making an offer of a chart, free of course, for which I got more than four hundred requests. Only here and there did a letter do more than say, "Send me the chart," but as the mail piled up on my desk I glowed. After all, each envelope contained a letter, and a letter is a letter.

For years I corresponded with a varied group of fellow letter writers. In the group was a professor of philosophy, the head of a market research firm, a sales manager (a collector of first editions, by the way), two business paper editors, and a magazine promotion director. Alas, one of the seldom mentioned penalties of aging is that the longer one survives, the smaller becomes the circle of one's correspondents. I am now (too rapidly) going on eighty-four and only one of the old group survives—the former head of an advertising agency, now retired and becoming more and more grumpy about things. I try, not very successfully, not to grump back.

I have tried to make up for the growing lack of people to write to by writing Letters to the Editor. Now and then one gets published but most editors don't write back, which makes Letters to the Editor a rather one-sided pastime.

As for junk mail—well, it's mail isn't it? I get a certain sadistic pleasure out of tossing into the basket the latest appeal to save some starving Third World tot. My limited means are sufficiently strained by helping out with American tots. Now and then I order something that is offered by a mail-order firm. This usually gives me the pleasure of dashing off a bitter letter of complaint a few weeks later when the goods haven't arrived.

CARROLL B. LARRABEE
Annandale, Virginia

* * *

Aristides' reflections on the joy of mail are an important contribution to thought about this subject, but they neglect one of its key aspects: the tragic plight of the mailless in American society. I refer to those who receive practically nothing in an average daily delivery except bills, circulars addressed to "Occupant," offers of insurance, bank statements, and so forth. But even more pitiable is the plight of the mailless academic. Most university departments have a common mail room, so that a professor's humiliation in receiving nothing but publishers' announcements, desk copies of the *Harbrace Handbook*, and rejected articles returned in his own self-addressed stamped envelopes is right out there in the open for his colleagues and the office staff to smirk about.

In order to cope with this problem, I myself adopted the expedient of sending important-looking envelopes (big brown ones with gummed address labels on them are especially impressive) to myself at my department address, bearing in the superscription the name of some eminent person. In a given week, I have received letters from Jean-Paul Sartre, Sir Karl Popper, "Chico" Borges (such nicknames can usually be invented without risk of detection), Henry Kissinger ("confidential—eyes only"), Franco Harris (tossing in this type of name will keep your colleagues guessing), and Faye Dunaway (heavily scented). You can arrange for the letters to be mailed by friends from appropriate postal zones, and you can experiment now and then with interesting switches—e.g., Borges writing from Las Vegas. This may be necessary anyway if you don't happen to know anybody down in Buenos Aires. Writing "Please forward" on the letter from, say, Samuel Beckett will suggest that (1) you have a reputation for being frequently abroad, and (2) the great personage is pretty worried lest he may miss you.

A word of warning, though, before you plunge in. Nothing will embarrass you more than receiving a letter from an eminent correspondent who

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turns out to have been dead for five years. An English professor at a midwest university had his promising career nipped in the bud when he faked a letter from George Lyman Kittredge, who, unbeknownst to the professor, had passed away a couple of years earlier.

For obvious reasons, I wish my name to be withheld from print. But please do send your answer on AMERICAN SCHOLAR stationery.

* * *

I have always enjoyed the urbane wisdom and light touch of Aristides; in fact his quarterly essay is the first thing I turn to. I would not have written this letter if he had not urged me to do so (in response to a personal note in which I had amended the anecdote he told on page 448 of the Autumn 1979 issue). The authentic version seems to be that in the "Porsoniana" which William Maltby (1763–1854) contributed to the *Table-Talk of Samuel Rogers* (ed. A. Dyce, 1856, 1887), page 352. Maltby was the zealous and sober bookman who had succeeded Richard Porson (d. 1808), the great Greek scholar and notorious alcoholic, as librarian of the London Institution.

The tale runs thus: "On returning from a visit to the Lakes, I told Porson that Southey had said to me, 'My *Madoc* has brought me in a mere trifle; but that poem will be a valuable possession to my family.' Porson answered, '*Madoc* will be read,—when Homer and Virgil are forgotten' (a *bon-mot* which reached Lord Byron, and which his lordship spoilt)." The last phrase refers to Byron's early note to *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, in which, not leaving Porson's barb to make its laconic and lethal impact, he spoke of *Thalaba* as "one of those poems 'which,' in the words of Porson, 'will be read when Homer and Virgil are forgotten, but—*not till then*' " (Byron, *Poetry*, ed. E. H. Coleridge, 1898, I, 313). M. L. Clarke (*Richard Porson*, 1937, p. 90), though aware of Maltby, quoted what he found in J. S. Watson's *Life* of Porson (1861, p. 306), and assumed that Byron wished "to avoid all possible misapprehension." Perhaps so; but we might in charity think that Byron had heard only the garbled version.

DOUGLAS BUSH
Gurney Professor of English
Literature Emeritus
Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

The State of Middle Eastern Studies

The assertion of one's own scholarly values against the ideologically or financially motivated attacks of one's critics is a well-tried, if not hackneyed, method of defense. This, in essence, is what Professor Lewis has tried to do in his article on the state of Middle Eastern studies in the Summer 1979 SCHOLAR. But such a defense itself requires some pretense at good scholarship if it is to sound convincing. As one of the editors of the *Review of Middle East Studies*, a publication which Professor Lewis describes as a "magazine . . . consisting largely of papers presented at a conference financed by the Libyan government," I would like to make one or two comments about the author's own scholarly procedures. First, most of the papers in the first two issues of the *Review* were presented at two conferences, not one—something which Professor Lewis could have discovered by reading the first page of each. Second, if he had read these same two first pages he would have noted that we thank the Libyan government for helping with the fares of some participants—rather different from financing the whole conference, which would have taken place anyway. Third, it is just as misleading to imply that the papers represent the views of the Libyan government itself as it is to assert that all the articles published in a journal like *Encounter* in the 1950s and 1960s represent the views of the CIA. Is this how scholarly argument is supposed to proceed?

But all this is of no great moment other than as an example of how Professor Lewis's lazy scholarship makes good polemic. What is of importance, though, is his attempt to dismiss most of the articles we publish simply on the grounds that they are written from a "Marxist point of view and grind a fairly audible ideological ax." To do this is to betray such a lamentable ignorance of the contribution of Marxist and Marxist-inspired writing to the development of all the social sciences as to be only laughable. If there is something called being scholarly there is also something called being snide.

ROGER OWEN
St. Antony's College
Oxford
England

BERNARD LEWIS replies: I must apologize to Dr. Owen for not having noticed that the first two issues of the review of which he is co-editor were based not on one but on two conferences (the rubric in the two issues is identical except for one digit), and for failing to specify that only a part, and not the whole, of the cost was met by the Libyan government, whose requirements for partial subvention are, it is to be presumed, proportionately less rigorous. I am relieved that Dr. Owen

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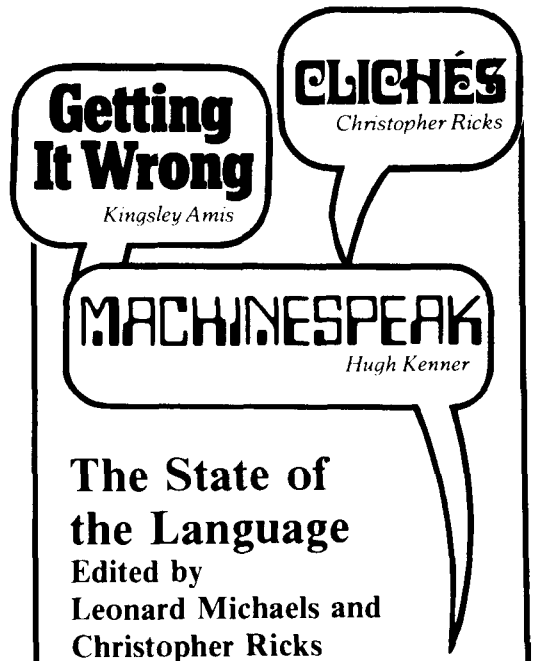
was able to find no other factual inaccuracies in my article and am confident that this result cannot be attributed to lazy criticism. His comparison between Libyan help to his own enterprise and the CIA subvention of *Encounter* in the 1950s and 1960s is instructive and persuasive, but surely he carries it too far. To the best of my recollection, the issues of *Encounter* published at that time did not consist mainly of contributions to one or even several conferences, nor did they remotely approach the striking ideological unanimity of the *Review of Middle East Studies.*

Dr. Owen's objection to polemic is not only irrelevant but also surprising, since the articles published in his journal consist almost entirely of polemics against scholars with only an occasional glancing blow in the direction of actual scholarship. The usual method is to choose a book for attack, and then castigate its author for not using Marxist methods and for insufficient deference to Islam. This is accompanied by imputations concerning the author's alleged motives, and is noteworthy for the absence of any discussion of the sources and substance of the study, which most of the "reviewers" are manifestly not qualified to undertake. No serious academic would claim immunity from criticism, and some commonly accepted Orientalist findings have been challenged by Muslim scholars like Fuad Sezgin and Marxist scholars like Maxime Rodinson. These differ as much from each other as from those they criticize, but all share a respect for standards of both research and debate, and possess the necessary knowledge of the sources and the skills needed to use them. Ideological fervor and political passion, even when tricked out in the latest fashionable jargon, are no substitute.

Dr. Owen should, however, in his own polemics, stop short of the rather crude rhetorical trick of exaggerating and distorting his adversary's point of view in order to refute it with greater ease.

I did indeed describe most of the papers in his *Review*—accurately—in the terms which he cites. If he chooses to regard this description as a dismissal, that is his problem; but when he goes on to equate the *Review* with the Marxist contribution to the social sciences, he is allowing either polemical fury or pride of creation to run away with him. The point at issue is not whether Marxists have made a substantial contribution to scholarship—they obviously have, not only in the social sciences but also in the classical Orientalism which Dr. Owen and his friends despise. Nor is the point at issue whether one accepts the exclusive truth of Marxist doctrine, with or without Islam. Where we differ is that the contributors to the *Review* object to scholarship without Marxism, whereas I object to Marxism without scholarship.



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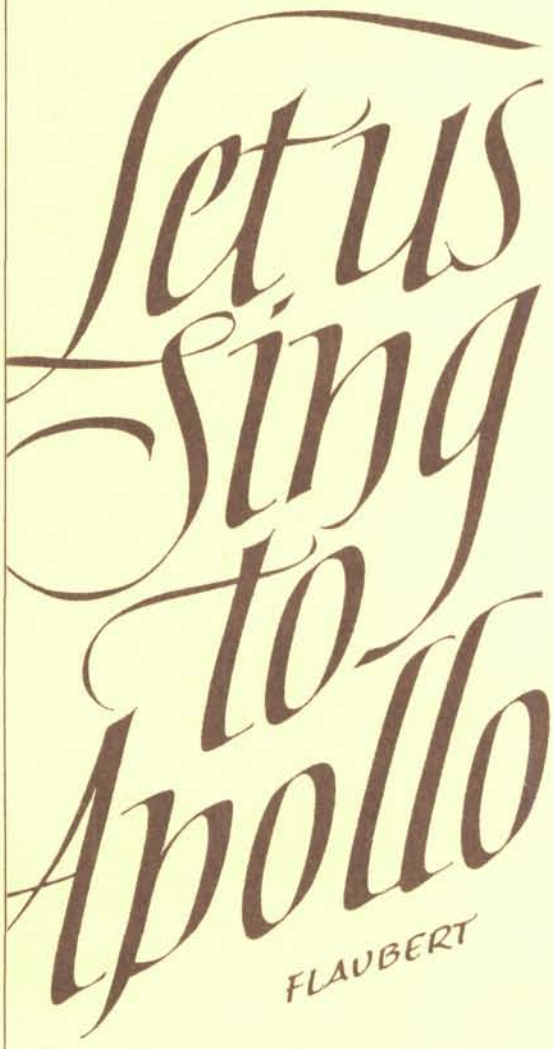

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